

LORD ROSEBERRY

BY

THE MARQUESS OF CREWE, K.G.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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TO
MY WIFE
THIS ATTEMPT TO TELL THE STORY OF
ONE WE BOTH LOVED

July 1981

PREFACE

SOON after Lord Rosebery died his family asked me to write his Life. I had seen more of him than most could. There was a long-standing family friendship ; I had known him for fifty years and been his near relation for many. But I did not disguise from myself the difficulty of the task. There was a great mass of material, of which some important elements were separately sorted, while others were indiscriminately dotted about at his different homes. He seldom destroyed even a trivial letter, so the work of selection was arduous. And the multiplicity of his interests made it imperative to include some illustration of each. But the labour was lightened by the ungrudging help rendered by the surviving members of Rosebery's family, by his secretary Mr. Stanley Brown, and by some of his old servants.

The material used in writing this book—apart from official documents and the correspondence of which acknowledgment is made later on—may be summarised under three heads. First, from the time he grew up, until his serious illness, Lord Rosebery made entries in a Letts' Diary. Often he only mentioned the weather and his own movements ; but he sometimes included short notes of great interest. Next, when travelling abroad he generally kept a tolerably copious journal, using a student's notebook. Lastly, especially in his later years, he jotted down impressions and appreciations, of persons or situations, on single sheets of letter-paper. Lady Rosebery's brief diaries have also been helpful.

It will be observed that I have not attempted to give in detail a political history, even of the few years during which Lord Rosebery held high office. Such notable books as John Morley's *Life of Gladstone*,

Lord Fitzmaurice's *Lord Granville*, Mr. A. G. Gardiner's *Sir William Harcourt*, and Mr. J. A. Spender's *Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman* cover much of the same ground, and I am greatly indebted to these, to say nothing of such histories as are concerned with the years from 1880 to 1910.

I have purposely placed the racing chapters at the end of each volume. Though the turf filled an important part in Rosebery's life, it seemed better not to break the continuity of the ordinary narrative by frequent interpolations of detail on a subject not of universal interest.

In the first place, I must offer my grateful duty to His Majesty the King, who graciously allowed me access to all relevant papers in the Windsor archives. It will be seen how greatly the book has gained from this permission.

Next I must respectfully thank those friends of Lord Rosebery and myself who have responded generously to my appeal for his letters. If I specially mention a few names, it is because their contributions have been large in bulk, and therefore frequently serviceable; but some single letters have proved to be of great value. The Trustees of Mr. Gladstone's papers were good enough to send me all the Rosebery letters, and I have also been favoured with his correspondence with Mrs. Drew (Mary Gladstone). The late Lord Esher was equally prompt, and Sir Robert Perks made an invaluable contribution. I have to thank Lord Spencer for a series of letters to his father and his uncle; Miss Haldane for those to her brother; and the sons of Sir George Trevelyan and Mr. Frederic Harrison for copious correspondence with their distinguished parents.

Outside the inner circle of the family, Sir George Murray and Lord Novar knew Rosebery better than anybody, and I cannot thank either sufficiently for his assistance. Sir George was also one of the executors of Rosebery's will; his colleague, Mr. C. Edmunds, long agent at Mentmore, has also helped me greatly.

Mr. John Buchan edited in 1921 two volumes of *Miscellanies* in which most of Rosebery's non-political addresses and some of his shorter writings are included. I have found these volumes indispensable for reference, and Mr. Buchan has been kind enough to read the proofs of the Scottish portions of the book.

Rosebery's brother, Everard Primrose, contemplated writing a history of the family. This was never done, but Mr. J. Macbeth Forbes of Edinburgh embarked on the enterprise. The work shows signs of research, its author evidently being specially attracted by the legal transactions and personal affairs of the earlier Primroses, while sufficiently narrating their public doings. It seems never to have been published, and it is questionable whether any copy exists besides the proof which was sent to Dalmeny. Apparently the notices of recent family doings, though harmless enough, were not approved there.

In 1900 Miss Jane T. Stoddart, a Scottish lady, brought out a popular sketch of Lord Rosebery in one volume adorned by a number of illustrations. It is a lively and good-natured chronicle of its hero's public and private life, evidently inspired by much respect and admiration.

I launch this barque on the waves of public opinion with some words which Lord Davidson of Lambeth wrote to me when a biography was being talked of:

“ I have certainly known no public man's life so difficult to depict in its odd combinations and perplexing variety of facets.

“ But there was never to me any doubt as to the sterling quality of the underlying metal.”

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CHAPTER I

THE PRIMROSE FAMILY: BOYHOOD: ETON

THE old Royal Burgh of Culross, on the northern shore of the Firth of Forth, some seven miles from Dunfermline, is described by a Scottish author as “a nook of Fife, difficult to get at, and still harder to get away from.” The family of Colville, whose title is attached to the Burgh, became its principal lairds, but at the close of the fifteenth century the town and its neighbourhood knew many inhabitants of the name of Primrose, written in half a dozen various forms, as was usual in that age. There were lands styled Primrose near Dunfermline, the property of its ancient abbey, but there is no reason to claim that the Primroses in or near Culross could describe themselves as “of that ilk.” They were small land-owners and “portioners” in Culross district, and, like many of their kind, brought up their sons to the liberal professions—the Church, the Law, and Medicine. The exact inter-relationships of many of this busy family during the sixteenth century, and the earlier years of the seventeenth when the Scottish and English crowns were united, remain obscure. One Archibald “Prymrois” was a collector of the King’s taxes in 1588, and became the chief adviser of King James VI for the Scottish Inland Revenue. Gilbert Primrose was Sergeant Chirurgeon to the same sovereign both in Edinburgh and afterwards in London, dying in 1616. A younger physician, James Primrose, endeavoured, with misplaced ardour, to refute Harvey’s demonstration of the circulation of the blood,¹ but also published a work² exposing the

¹ *Exercitationes et Animadversiones in Librum de Motu Cordis et Circulatione Sanguinis. Adversus G. Harveum, etc.* (London, 1680.)

² *De Vulgi Erroribus in Medicina.* (London, 1638.)

folly of various popular medical theories, such as that forbidding the linen of the sick to be changed ; another Gilbert, a man of real distinction, became Pastor of the Reformed Church at Bordeaux, and later of the French Church founded by King Edward VI in London, ending as a Canon of Windsor ; and a third Gilbert was assistant to his father James Primrose as Clerk to the Privy Council.

This James Primrose, who was born about 1570, became a notable figure in Scotland, and as the instrument of the purely personal rule of King James VI in his northern kingdom, exercised powers that were almost despotic. He can be regarded as the Great Elector, so to speak, of the Primrose line. His son Archibald Primrose proceeded to establish the dynasty on a solid foundation. Born in 1616, he succeeded his father as Clerk of the Privy Council when only twenty-five years old, and became the confidential agent of Charles I. He fought under Montrose, was convicted of high treason, and was fortunate in escaping with his life. In 1651 he followed Charles II on the march that ended at Worcester, and was created a Baronet of Nova Scotia a month before that crowning disaster. His estates were confiscated, but he does not seem to have been personally molested. When the tide turned in 1660 he at once rose to the surface as Lord Clerk Register of Scotland, and soon afterwards became a Lord of Session, with the title of Lord Carrington. The Lord Clerk Register was one of the eight great officers of state who sat *ex officio* in the Scottish Parliament, and Sir Archibald was the principal draughtsman of the startling Rescissory Act, which annulled all the proceedings of Parliament during the past twenty-eight years, and of the series of Acts declaring the royal prerogative. His critical friend, Bishop Burnet, later noted : " He often confessed to me that he thought he was as one bewitched while he drew them ; for not considering the ill use which might be made of them afterwards, he drew them with preambles

full of extravagant rhetoric reflecting severely on the proceedings of the late times, and swelled them up with the highest phrases and fullest clauses that he could invent." This would be impossible nowadays, but even in these less spacious times we have known briefer and less ornate preambles that have brought trouble upon their authors.

There has been no period in British or in any other history when intrigue flourished more rankly than in the reign of Charles II, and even a man of Sir Archibald Primrose's adroitness was bound sooner or later to become its victim. He could not steer a permanent course between the rivalries of the Earl of Middleton and the Duke of Lauderdale, and he was first deprived of his office of Lord Clerk Register and given the lower appointment of Justice-General. Two years later he was again retired, and in 1679 he died at the age of sixty-three. He had bought, in 1662, the Castle of Barnbougle, with its surrounding estate of Dalmeny, from the 4th Earl of Haddington, and had also acquired various other properties in the Lothians. His portrait hangs at Dalmeny—a sidelong, furtive figure, but by no means devoid of strength of character.

Bishop Burnet's summary of his character has often been quoted :

" The subtilest of all Lord Middletoun's friends was Sir Archibald Primrose ; a man of long and great practice in affairs ; for he and his father had served the crown successively a hundred years all but one, when he was turned out of employment. He was a dexterous man of business : he always had expedients ready at any difficulty. He had an art of speaking to all men according to their sense of things : and so drew out their secrets, while he concealed his own : for words went for nothing with him. He said everything that was necessary to persuade those he spoke to, that he was of their mind ; and did it in so genuine a way, that he seemed to speak his heart. He was always for soft counsels and slow methods ; and thought that the chief thing that a great man ought to do was to raise his family and his kindred, who naturally stick to him ; for he had seen so much

of the world, that he did not depend much on friends, and so took no care in making any.”¹

Sir Archibald was twice married, first to Elizabeth Keith, an offshoot of the great family of the Earls Marischal; and secondly to Agnes, daughter of Sir William Gray of Pittendrum, and widow of Sir James Dundas of Newliston. By the first marriage he had five sons and three daughters, by the second he had one son and two daughters.

The early constitutional history of Scotland is dark and confused from the absence of such continuous documentary evidence as is available to students in England; but it is established that peerages, of the English pattern, did not exist there till late in the sixteenth century, and that they were not legalised in the strict sense till 1689. The great territorial earldoms dating from the twelfth century, mainly held by families of Norman origin, the powerful lords who guarded the English border, owning lands in the south and east, and the chiefs of the most powerful Highland septs, made up a feudal nobility as turbulent and masterful as the Orsini and Savelli of mediæval Rome. It was in no sense parliamentary. The great Baron had his seat in the Estates, but so had the small freeholder who was a tenant-in-chief. And as the representation of shires and burghs became systematised there grew up alongside the feudal baronage a *noblesse de robe*, which has no exact parallel in England, but bears some resemblance to the French order so described. The French Parliaments became in the end purely legal bodies because the Kings of France were usually able to stave off all popular government in a way seldom open to the Kings of Scotland. At the same time the Three Estates of the Scottish Parliament, while struggling intermittently to play their part in legislation, regularly carried on their judicial functions. The College of Justice was

¹ *History of His Own Time*, Burnet (*History of the Reign of King Charles II*, 1660). (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1828, vol. i, p. 178.)

a Committee of the Estates dating in its original form from the fourteenth century, and its members bore, as they still bear, the title of "Lord." But there was also a preponderating legal element in what we should now call the Civil Service. Writers and advocates, many of them cadets of landowning families, became secretaries and auditors in the service of the Crown, and from time to time were ennobled. From such origins sprang the northern *noblesse de robe*, which included names as distinguished as those of Rollo and Hope, Napier and Nairne.

However, neither Sir Archibald Primrose's services, nor those of his father, quite raised him to the peerage, and his eldest surviving son, Sir William Primrose, who had been jobbed into a high legal office in his seventeenth year, neglected his duties, was dismissed, became paralysed, and died young.

His wife was Mary Scot of Thirlestane, and by her he had seven children, of whom the eldest surviving son, James, succeeded as a child to the baronetcy and the estate of Carrington. He was elected Member of Parliament for the County of Edinburgh in Queen Anne's first Parliament in 1703, and in November of the same year was created Viscount Primrose, with the addition of two baronies. This elevation of a man of twenty-four may perhaps have been partly due to the services of his forbears to earlier Stuart sovereigns, and partly to the fact that his half-uncle, Archibald, representing the younger line, had already been made a peer in 1700. James, Lord Primrose, married Mary Campbell, daughter of the 2nd Earl of Loudoun, by whom he had four children, and, though he took part in one of Marlborough's campaigns, is remembered only as a matrimonial misdemeanant. The story goes that Lady Primrose, following a practice as old as King Saul and as modern as the advertisement columns of to-day's newspaper, went to consult a fashionable professor of the occult, having for a long time had no news of her absent husband. Looking into a magic mirror, she witnessed

a marriage ceremony in a foreign church, which was suddenly interrupted by the arrival of armed intruders. Later, she heard from her brother that, on that very day, he had chanced to be in Holland, and had forcibly interfered to prevent Lord Primrose's marriage to an innocent Dutch girl of great fortune. The tale is told in Dr. Robert Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh*, and by Sir Walter Scott, under fictitious names, in the story *My Aunt Margaret's Mirror*.¹

The scapegrace returned to Scotland, and died there when only twenty-seven. His two sons succeeded in turn to his title, the elder, Archibald, dying as a boy of sixteen, the younger, Hugh, distinguishing himself in the Army under Prince Eugène, and dying as a Colonel, in 1741, before he was forty. He married the daughter of Dean Drelincourt, but was childless, so that his baronetcy, and possibly his peerages, passed to his cousin, the 2nd Earl of Rosebery.

Archibald Primrose, the eldest son of Sir Archibald, Lord Carrington, by his second marriage, was born in 1664. He served against the Turks in the Imperial Army in Hungary, got into some trouble with James II's Scottish officials just before the Revolution, and after it joined the Household of Prince George of Denmark. Member for Edinburgh in 1695, he was created Viscount Rosebery five years later, and advanced to an earldom after the accession of Queen Anne. He was one of the Commissioners for the Treaty of Union, and after its acceptance was chosen to be a representative peer. His wife was Dorothea Cressy, an attractive Yorkshire girl of ancient family, and he died in 1723. The records show him to have been a man of some ability, and not without taste. Some satirical verses are ascribed to him, but they were not printed. His eldest son, James, succeeded

¹ *My Aunt Margaret's Mirror*, not considered worthy of a place in the first series of *Chronicles of the Canongate* (1827), appeared in Charles Heath's *Keepsake* in 1828. Lockhart says (*Life*, vol. vii, p. 108) : "Sir Walter regretted having meddled in any way with the toy-shop of literature, and would never do so again, though repeatedly offered very large sums."

as second Earl. He had been imprisoned in the Old Tolbooth for debt in his father's lifetime, and seems to have been in money difficulties all his life, less from any picturesque habits of extravagance (though he was debauched enough), than from being on the border-line of insanity and a practitioner of unsuccessful litigation, especially with his nearest relatives. He enjoyed the entailed estates of Dalmeny, but his father took care to leave all his personal property to his younger children. He married Mary Campbell, sister of the 4th Duke of Argyll, and thus became brother-in-law to Simon, Lord Lovat, who actually succeeded in borrowing money from him. One of his three sisters married her cousin, Sir Archibald Primrose, who had assumed his mother's name in place of that of his father, Sir John Foulis, and was executed for his part in the rebellion of 1745. Lord Rosebery died in 1755, leaving two sons and two daughters.

The elder of the sons, who died as Lord Dalmeny a few months before his father, was of very different metal—cultivated, high-minded, and the main support of his mother and sisters during the prolonged family squabbles. His own marriage was a romance with a strange ending. He met in London Catherine Canham, the daughter of a rich Essex yeoman. It was a misalliance, so the marriage was private, and the couple went abroad as Mr. and Mrs. Williams, living mainly in northern Italy. After four years she died at Verona, and in her last hours wrote in pencil the confession that she was the wife of the Rev. Alexander Gough, Vicar of Thorpe-le-Soken, where she begged that she might be buried. Her embalmed body was taken home, and by a strange sequence of events, her two husbands met, first in anger, then with sympathy; and they walked side by side at the pompous obsequies in Thorpe churchyard.¹

¹ Readers of Thomas Hardy's *A Pair of Blue Eyes* will be reminded of the funeral of Elfrida Luxellian, though her love-tragedy ran on very different lines from that of Catherine Gough.

The death of Lord Dalmeny left his brother Neil, some four years younger, the only male representative of the Primroses, two other brothers having died in childhood. Following the sensible practice of many Scottish younger sons, he had gone into a merchant's business in London, and this training helped him to repair the rather dilapidated family fortunes. He first married a Norfolk heiress, daughter of Sir Edward Ward of Bixley, and secondly the daughter of Sir Francis Vincent of Stoke D'Abernon, having six children by this last marriage. He was a Representative Peer, a Knight of the Thistle, and a popular country gentleman. His eldest son Archibald was born in 1783 and succeeded in 1814.

The 4th Lord Rosebery's first marriage to Harriet Bouverie, a girl of seventeen, ended in a miserable scandal after five years of marriage and the birth of four children. Her elder sister had died a year after her marriage to Sir Henry St. John Mildmay; pity and self-pity beguiled Lady Rosebery and the young widower into romance, and a divorce followed in 1814. The passionate couple, more fortunate than those of Rimini,¹ were able to marry in a foreign country, and their eldest son lived into the present century, a well-known social figure.

Lord Rosebery, who had sat for a short time in the House of Commons, was a Scottish Representative Peer until 1828, when he was given a Barony of the United Kingdom. He was a keen supporter of Lord Grey, he was made a Privy Councillor in 1831, and worked actively for the Reform Bill, presiding in 1843 at the great Banquet in Edinburgh, when his

¹ *Inferno*, canto v, l. 100.

Amor ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende,
Prese costui della bella persona
Che mi fu tolta, e'l modo ancor m'offende.

Amor ch'a null'amato amar perdona;
Mi prese del costui piacer sí forte,
Che come vedi ancor non m'abbandona.



NEIL, 3RD EARL OF ROSEBERY, AND HIS FAMILY, BY NASMYTH.

leader received the Freedom of the City. His second marriage, in 1819, to Anne, daughter of the 1st Viscount Anson, was singularly happy. She outlived him by fourteen years, and became the much-loved "Grandmama" of the subject of this memoir and his brother and sisters. He himself lived till 1868, a patriarch honoured by his family and by his neighbours.

Archibald, Lord Dalmeny, the elder son of his first marriage, was born in 1809. Like his father, he was an active Liberal, sitting for the Stirling burghs, and being a Lord of the Admiralty in Lord Melbourne's administration until 1841. In one respect he was in advance of his generation by realising the value to the many of physical education, which, except for those who liked to use their fists, had been considered the privilege of the few. He published in 1848 *An Address to the Middle Classes on the Subject of Gymnastic Exercises*. He may have overstated his thesis that exercise, rather than fresh air, is the one thing needful for physical vigour, and have strained his heart in becoming a swordsman of great accomplishment; for when apparently recovering from an attack of pleurisy, he died suddenly from a heart attack, when only forty years old. He had married, in 1843, Catherine Lucy Wilhelmina Stanhope, the only daughter of Philip, 4th Earl Stanhope. This junior branch of the house of which the Earl of Chesterfield was the head, had for some generations given evidence of originality and of considerable intellectual powers. The first Earl, who married Lucy Pitt, the aunt of Lord Chatham, was conspicuous as a soldier and in Parliament in the reign of George I. The second was highly distinguished as a mathematician. Charles, the third Earl, who lived till 1816, was equally well known for his republican sympathies, which earned him the sobriquet "Citizen Stanhope," and for his attainments in applied science. The improved printing press, the earliest introduction of steam vessels, the possibilities of electricity, all engaged his agile

attention ; but he must have lacked the concentration and the balance of the scientific master mind. Lord Stanhope was twice married, first to his second cousin Lady Hester Pitt, sister of the younger Pitt, and secondly to Louisa Grenville, niece of Lord Temple and of George Grenville. His son by his second marriage, who succeeded to the title, showed some of his eccentricity in a less conspicuous form, and also pursued some of the scientific researches of his father.

At the same time, however, Lord Stanhope was a greater subject of interest from the promise of his children. I have heard from a contemporary how it was a common saying that Lord Stanhope was a lucky man to be the father of the cleverest son and the most attractive daughter in London. The son, another Philip, who in due course became the 5th Earl Stanhope, did not literally justify this verdict of a limited social jury ; for he was the exact age of Disraeli and but four years older than Gladstone. But he became a considerable figure in Parliament, and a genuine man of letters. Those who care to go behind the slapdash histories that crowd the lending libraries could do worse than take up Lord Stanhope's *Reign of Queen Anne*. With a little more attraction of style it would be a very good book indeed. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, being the fourth in direct descent to receive that distinction. It may be questioned whether the British peerage can present any parallel.¹ At any rate, there could be no dispute about Lady Wilhelmina Stanhope's charm. Of middle height—her features not of a classical model—her brilliancy of colour, her play of expression, her intense vivacity, disarmed all criticism and left her an unchallenged beauty, both before and after her marriage. Four children were

¹ Until 1778, when Sir Joseph Banks became President of the Royal Society, it sometimes happened that Fellows were elected rather as patrons of scientific learning than as experts ; but the earlier Fellows of the Stanhope line do not seem to have fallen into this category.

born to Lord and Lady Dalmeny during their married life of eight years :

Mary Catherine Constance, *b.* 1844.

Constance Evelyn, *b.* 1846.

Archibald Philip (the subject of this memoir), *b.* 1847.

Everard Henry, *b.* 1848.

For some years their headquarters in London were at Lord Stanhope's house in Charles Street, Berkeley Square, where Archibald Philip was born on May 7th, 1847. When the lease of this house came to an end in the following year, they moved to the rather monotonous formality of Eaton Place. There the widowed Lady Dalmeny and her children continued to live, spending part of the summer with her father at Chevening in Kent, and the autumn with her father-in-law at Dalmeny. In 1854 came a change which brought much colour into the children's lives by their mother's marriage to Lord Henry Vane, brother and heir of the 2nd Duke of Cleveland. He had a house in Grosvenor Place, where they all settled. By a rather unusual chance, the vast Cleveland possessions, comprising, besides the wide stretch of farmland and moorland in County Durham of which Raby Castle was the centre, estates in ten other English shires, did not include any secondary house of importance which Lord Harry might naturally have inhabited. So that, for several years after his marriage, he rented such well-known places as Brocket, the home of Lady Palmerston, and the Priory at Reigate. The winter of 1854, however, was spent abroad by the newly wedded pair and by Lady Harry's children. This was the period of transition between the old leisurely travel by chaise or diligence and the universal reign of railways. The Paris-Mediterranean line then ceased at Lyons; so the travellers made their way by river to Marseilles, and from Nice by ship to Naples, which was then the resort of many cultivated English and French visitors.

Among the favourite Italian playmates of the Primroses was Princess Maria Camporeale, destined later to adorn the diplomatic world as the wife of Prince Bernard von Bülow, the German Chancellor.

In the following year Archibald Dalmeny went to his first school, Bayford, near Hertford. Few intimacies are closer than those of boys at preparatory schools, fresh from home, and not yet making cardinal virtues of reticence and self-reliance ; but unless these friendships are continued and reinforced at a public school or college they are apt to die early. Two of the Beresford¹ brothers, Lord Claud Hamilton,² and George Bridgeman³ were among his fellow pupils.

His letters to his mother show a budding interest in public affairs, for in 1857 there is a list of relatives of his schoolfellows who were likely to stand for Parliament. All of them glow with affection for herself and for the whole family. When his brother arrived at school in 1857, the responsible ten-years-old senior writes : “Evy is a hero. There never was a braver boy. He came to me last night and cried on my shoulder, and said he was homesick. That is all over now however. They bully him rather, but a braver boy I never saw. I try to be as kind as I can. I never try to mention your name between us, it might make him sad.” Some of his holidays were spent at Dalmeny, in the surroundings which remained dearest to him throughout all the excitements and chances of the richly coloured years to come.

He was eleven when an accident happened of which the exact gravity remains uncertain. In the course of some game he ran blindfold into an iron gate, striking the hasp, which made a deep wound in his forehead, and caused some concussion of the brain. He was invalided home, kept in a darkened room,

¹Lord Charles Beresford (1846-1919), Admiral ; created Lord Beresford 1916 ; Lord William Beresford, V.C. (1847-1900).

²(1848-1925.) Son of the 1st Duke of Abercorn, M.P. from 1865.

³George Bridgeman, 4th Earl of Bradford, 1845-1915. In a touching letter of condolence to the Dowager Lady Bradford, January 10th, 1915, Rosebery described it as “the Bayford of many jokes.”

and, according to the recollection of his sister, “ remained ill for a long time, with fits of deep depression, hating all exercise and conversation, only asking to be left alone.” The scar on his forehead was patent to the end of his life, and his family sometimes wondered whether this mishap was directly responsible for the nervous irritability which, as we shall see, now and then afflicted him in later years, and for the craving for solitude which was liable to puzzle his dearest relatives and most congenial friends. It may be, on the other hand, that the severe blow simply gave premature life to innate tendencies which would have matured in any event, and could not have been evaded altogether. While his slow recovery was progressing, the school at Bayford was closed, and Dalmeny joined Everard at Mr. Lee’s well-known school at Brighton.

Meanwhile Lord Harry Vane had bought Battle Abbey, one of the shrines of English history, and the boys’ holidays were spent there or in Scotland until, in 1860, Dalmeny went to Eton. Then, and for many years later, entrance to the public schools was graded on a purely classical standard. He was a promising scholar, and was placed in Remove. But he came from a cultivated home, and was early encouraged to read soundly outside his regular curriculum. The poems of Gray and of Scott, and the *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers*—early gifts from his grandfather and his grandmother—remained in his bedroom to the last, with the *Arabian Nights*, in which he noted, years later: “This is the copy which we all read out of as children. It afterwards was given to me by my mother when I was at Bayford.” Four volumes of Macaulay’s *Essays* were a New Year present from his mother in 1858. More than fifty years later, sending to Sir George Trevelyan a letter of warm thanks for his gift of some of Macaulay’s own volumes, he wrote as follows:

July 13th, 1911.

“... This only increases my overwhelming debt to Macaulay, for in truth I owe him everything. He first touched my trembling ears. On such an occasion it may not

bore you to know how this came about. At Christmas 1858, when I was eleven, we were all playing snap-dragon at Chevening. The flames burst out of the dish, and I, among others, was cruelly burnt. That night I was introduced to Walter Scott by my mother's reading to me the *Legend of Montrose* to keep me quiet. A day or two afterwards I was wandering about the delightful Chevening library (which you know well), and quite by chance took down Macaulay's *Essays*. I fell at once under the wand of the enchanter. I began with Milton, and read no other book till I had finished the three volumes. And at the New Year my mother, seeing my absorption, gave me a copy.

"There was much, of course, that I could not really understand. But I delighted in the eloquence, the grasp and the command of knowledge, the irresistible current of the style. And to that book I owe whatever ambitions or aspirations I have ever indulged in. No man can intellectually owe another more."

Before long another current of influence flowed into that young mind. A translation of Thiers' *History of the Consulate and the Empire*, published in 1850, has the inscription "Dalmeny, March 7, 1859," and the following pencil note: "This book I bought when in quarantine at Mr. Lee's school after the measles. I read it right through.—R. 1885."

This book, surely, also nourished, if not ambitions and aspirations, at least admirations and sympathies destined to colour the web of the boy's approaching manhood.

Dalmeny's house at Eton was a "Dame's," that of Mr. Vidal; but, by an uncommon chance, his tutor, being the unmarried brother of Mrs. Vidal, made it headquarters for himself and for his pupil room. That tutor was William Johnson, "Billy" to his intimates, and (behind his back) to his pupils; perhaps better known to the public as William Cory, the name which he assumed in respect of an inheritance, but also, it appears, because it sounded more distinguished than Johnson.¹

¹ His elder brother similarly changed his name to that of Furse, destined to become celebrated by the admirable art of his son Charles.

Not a few headmasters of the great public schools have, in various ways, left an enduring mark on the life of this country. Arnold, the Butlers, Thring, Warre, and Sanderson are familiar names outside the bounds of their respective schools. It is difficult to cite under-masters equally famous, beyond William Johnson and his friend Edward Bowen of Harrow.¹ And each of these, possibly, is as widely known by the evidence which he left of a "deep poetic heart" as by his conspicuous service as a teacher. Some of William Cory's exquisite verses will continue to adorn every lyrical anthology.

In a long and cheerful letter to his mother, just after his arrival at Eton, Dalmeny remarks that "fagging is very nominal," and he is evidently not made anxious by the length of school hours, of which he gives a detailed time-table. A letter of a year later, 1861, to his mother, when he was a spectator of the school Confirmation, shows a depth of seriousness unusual in a boy of fourteen.

"Oh Mother," he writes, "the Confirmation was so beautiful you can't imagine. . . . When the Bishop had finished the last prayer in burst the organ and it played while one party was returning and the other coming up. I think almost every one felt it very much indeed and they seemed almost crying except one who laughed I believe while the Bishop was actually laying hands on him at any rate immediately after it. I think this was the most horrible thing ever thought of. Just when God was about to admit him to his table—laughing. I prayed Mother that I never should commit such an enormous sin . . . now you darling you must not show this to anyone the offspring of my sentimentality, but I cannot help feeling sure that God has

¹ It may not be fanciful to ascribe some part of the influence which each of these remarkable men gained over a succession of pupils to their common love for military history and patriotic prowess. In Sir Henry Newbolt's noble elegy on William Cory the refrain rings with the "splendour of England's war." And Bowen's "Modern Side" at Harrow had many of the elements of an "Army Class," while he was fond of conducting parties of boys over the battlefields of Flanders and of Alsace-Lorraine.

sent this Confirmation for my special good as it impressed me so much."

The severe criticism of boyhood could make no allowance for the nervous crisis which reduced the one unlucky candidate to hysterical laughter.

When Dalmeny reached the age of sixteen, and the time arrived for his own Confirmation, he was disappointed by the postponement "of what I looked forward to so much, (though I confess that the feeling of my own unfitness made me almost dread the ceremony) as a high and holy privilege." These sound like the utterances of a thoughtful boy, looking piously forward to a clerical Fellowship at the University. They are noted here because they illustrate one element in a complex character—an element which the passage of years never served to dissipate.

But it was far from being the sole, or even the most obvious element. In 1862 he tells his mother, "I wish I wrote oftener, but you must excuse me a little on account of Summer half, when one is always out in a boat or playing at cricket or sapping," and continues with a comical account of the downpour which ruined the 4th of June, when at Surley the rain drove everybody back to the boats, leaving a dozen of champagne behind them, and nobody got drunk, partly because there was not time, partly because "the rain very considerably adulterated the champagne"—though some of the younger boys of the party seem to have tried their best. He steered one of the boats "in a kind of midshipman's cap which is if possible worse" than a cocked hat. Later he had a place in the ten-oar *Monarch*, but the pastime that he most enjoyed was fives. This probably led, when he went to Oxford, to a fondness for racquets, which were not then played at Eton.

In the meantime his tutor was eagerly watching a rare mind breaking gradually into flower. When Dalmeny was fifteen Johnson wrote to his friend, Henry Bradshaw¹:

¹ *Letters and Journals of William Cory.* (Oxford, 1897, p. 75.)

“ But come, anyhow, to see the boys and young men. My friend Dalmeny is looking forward to making your acquaintance, with the natural eagerness of a budding bibliomaniac. I took him last week to Lilly’s, and he forthwith enquired for rare tracts printed by his ancestor Primrose. We went on to Evans’, and there he picked out another print representing another Primrose of the seventeenth century, preacher to the French Church in London. At Holloway’s he bought autographs, and finally went and made acquaintance with my brother and sister, and showed as much interest in a live child as in dead books. He has the finest combination of qualities I have ever seen. He was quite taken, as I was too, with Dufferin’s show speech (do you remember Dufferin, how Cookesley called him the ‘orator’?); and when Wayte set theme out of it the boy put the peroration about ‘Laboramus’ into flowing, simple, dignified Latin, and then went with me through the last book of *The Princess*. The night before I had translated to him most of the beautiful bits of *Agamemnon*, and I assure you he enjoyed the old poetry nearly as much as the modern. I am doing all I can to make him a scholar; anyhow he will be an orator, and, if not a poet, such a man as poets delight in.”

Later in the same year, when illness had driven him to seek a spell of rest at Cambridge, he wrote to F. Warre Cornish, who was then taking charge of his pupil room¹:

“ . . . I have sent these lads some modern history questions: and Dalmeny promises to do them, that he may thereby induce me to come back—rather a circuitous reason. I would give you a piece of plate if you would get that lad to work; he is one of those who like the palm without the dust. He wrote me word that he got ‘fair’ for his lyrics. . . . ”

The Horatian metaphor,² familiar to English readers from its reproduction in the famous passage of

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

² “ . . . cui spes,
cui sit condicio dulcis sine pulvere palmae? ”
Hor., *Epp.* I, 1, 50.

Milton's prose,¹ undoubtedly represents the teacher's verdict at the time, and it has since been quoted a dozen times by critics of Rosebery's public career.

But it should not be misapprehended. Milton, of course, was thinking of those who avoid, in conventional seclusion, the coarse contacts of a sinful world ; the common interpretation of the phrase would apply it to the superficial and indolent, who try to find short cuts to distinction instead of toiling up steep and stony roads. Neither of these readings, it will become clear, covers the idiosyncrasies of Rosebery's character. He often enjoyed rubbing shoulders with the everyday world ; and he was capable of severe and continuous industry. But he displayed fastidious distaste for "dust," or rather, if the metaphor is to be rendered into English, for mud ; so that thus far William Johnson's prognosis is as accurate as a schoolmaster's need be.

About the same time he writes to his pupil² : "I have been qualifying for an interview with *you* by reading the *Family Life* of Pitt,"³ and gives a careful estimate of the book, with some acute observations on passages in Pitt's career. Another letter⁴ tells of a visit to Boconnoc and its relics of the younger Pitt and the Grenvilles.

But the boy did not limit his literary interest to correspondence with his tutor. About 1863 he boldly wrote on some point of Scottish knowledge to Mr. Robert Chambers, one of the famous publishing firm, and author of *Traditions of Edinburgh*—"quite an adventure to me at that tender age."⁵ He was asked to luncheon in London in consequence, and was shown a copy of *The Lyon in Mourning*.

¹ "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat."—*Historical, etc., Works, Areopagitica*. (London, 1753, p. 156.)

² Cambridge, April 20th, 1862.

³ Lord Stanhope's *Life of Pitt*.

⁴ Penzance, August 29th, 1862.

⁵ Lord Rosebery to Mr. C. E. S. Chambers, June 26th, 1910.

In several ways he was not an altogether easy boy to deal with. If he forgot to wipe his feet at the pupil-room door and received a book at his head, accompanying his tutor's cry of “Shoes! shoes!” this may have happened to many others, but, in the words of Lord Esher, who was one of Johnson's favourite pupils a year or two later :

“Lord Rosebery as a boy was difficult of access, even to his tutor. So much so that the unusual method had on one occasion to be adopted of tearing over his verses in order to secure his presence in ‘pupil room.’ It had the desired effect, and to his enquiry of why that indignity had been put upon him, he was told the story of how Absalom burnt Joab's corn when he found that an interview could not be obtained by less drastic means.”

This episode earned Lord Rosebery a nickname.¹ For years afterwards Johnson spoke of “Joab's” doings without further explanation.

Likewise in his relations with his schoolfellows there was a shade of constraint, which did not prevent him from being admired and popular. As Walter Bagehot puts it, “We see but one side of our neighbour, as we see but one side of the moon : in either case there is also a dark half, which is unknown to us. We all come down to dinner, but each has a room to himself.”² Then and always his “room” had almost the properties of a secret chamber. However this may have been at Eton, many of his closest and most enduring friendships dated thence. The accident of placing in “school” produced the following line, treated as an hexameter by outrageous mispronunciation of the last three names :

“Alexander, Lamb,³ Dalmeny, Palairet, Hamilton.”⁴ Of the above, Hamilton remained a most intimate ally throughout his life ; others, some of whom survived

¹ *Cloud-capp'd Towers.* (London (Murray), 1927, p. 21.)

² Shakespeare, “The Man.”

³ Sir Archibald Lamb, Bt.

⁴ Rt. Hon. Sir E. Hamilton, G.C.B.

him, were Frederick Wood,¹ Lascelles,² Aboyne,³ and his fag William Portal.⁴

When he was about fifteen his tutor, ever on the alert to practise mental gymnastics, suggested that he should begin the "Memoirs of his Own Time." Accordingly, for two years at any rate, he jotted down at uncertain intervals reports of events important to Eton, such as the election of a new provost and headmaster, comments on political affairs, social anecdotes told by fashionable friends of his family, and some special experiences of his own. Among these last is an account of a day spent at St. Anne's Hill, with a full description of the house and the formal gardens. "Altogether," he writes, "I came away with increased love and veneration for Mr. Fox and his whole race." Time, and his absorption in the career of the younger Pitt, tended to dim this sentiment for the Whig leader himself, but not for the Lady Holland who then reigned at St. Anne's Hill. Her gift to him of Charles Fox's *Virgil* had a permanent place on his personal bookshelf. The notebooks have also a series of pages on a scandalous blackmailing accusation against Lord Palmerston in his advanced old age, which naturally thrilled every *gobe-mouches* of the day. The charge against the famous Harrovian Prime Minister percolated to the amused ears of Eton boys.

"If not a poet . . ." his tutor had written ; but he had his full share of the lyrical faculty so frequent in cultured youth, so rarely destined to mature with the passage of years. Of some Latin verses, his tutor had written : "I looked over Dalmeny's verses : to alter them was a long, delicate job, as they were not commonplace, *pro forma* things, but an honest attempt to turn (of his own accord) some rhymes of mine which he had read in manuscript." But he did not stop at classical exercises. In 1862 a slim volume contain-

¹ Fourth son of the 1st Viscount Halifax. Assumed the name of Meynell on succeeding to the Hoar Cross estate (1846-1910).

² 5th Earl of Harewood (1846-1929).

³ 11th Marquess of Huntly. Succeeded his father while at Eton.

⁴ Sir William Wyndham Portal, second Baronet.

ing *The Marriage of Peleus and Thetis*, together with *Two Efforts in Blank Verse*, were "Privately printed for the Author" at Eton. His version of the Greek legend shows remarkable promise for a boy of fifteen. The metres are skilfully varied, and the atmosphere is well sustained. The author had evidently read his Milton, his Dryden, and his Keats; but his poem is none the worse for that. The two poems in blank verse, one telling the story of Rizpah, from the Second Book of Samuel, the other a Cornish tale, are less distinguished, as might be expected. Blank verse defies the craftsmanship of almost every young writer. "Please show the little book to *no one*," he writes to Lord Stanhope, when sending his literary uncle a copy gorgeously bound in green morocco.

As the delightful years passed at Eton, William Johnson's uneasiness at the irregularity of Dalmeny's genius seems to have increased. In September 1864 he wrote in his journal: "Received a very good, thoughtful letter from my employer, the mother of the beloved Archie and Everard, of whom I was glad to be reminded. If they were only as fond of knowledge as Cambridge men!" The "employer" was seriously impressed by the tutor's complaints that her son's work was not up to the mark, and with the impulsiveness natural to her, she determined that he must leave school at Easter 1865, when not yet eighteen, in order to read elsewhere before going to Oxford. This may have been to take Johnson more literally than he intended, for he wrote a long letter from Cambridge in January, condoling with Dalmeny for missing "the last summer, which is often so full of interest as to blot out the memory of all earlier years." The letter goes on with an eloquent appreciation of the boon granted to "a genuine Eton playmate," and of what tutors can and cannot do for their pupils, hard-working or idle.¹ Perhaps some veiled irony peeps through these last sentences. To the boy himself this unexpected summons was a matter

¹ William Johnson to Lord Dalmeny. K.C.C., January 10th, 1865.

of deep chagrin. To miss the “ jolly boating weather and a hay-harvest breeze ” of his tutor’s song was bad enough ; but he was now an active member of the Eton Society, famous as “ Pop ” even outside Eton. In the end, youth and the Eton tradition won the day ; Lord Rosebery was appealed to, and gave his verdict in favour of the summer half ; whatever domestic friction had occurred quickly disappeared, and soon the home letters exhibited no diminished freedom and interchange of affection.¹

He was elected a member of the Eton Society in October 1864 ; receiving but four black balls, while twenty-three voted. The debates, which took place about once a month, were often on an historical subject, generally in the form of an inquiry whether the character of a particular personage was to be admired. Many of the speeches were long and serious, showing not a little careful study and research, but members of an ironical turn, like Dalmeny, were able to enjoy themselves when on their legs, and even more in writing the reports, all of which have been carefully preserved.² It thus often happened that a speaker was able to immortalise his own effort in a comic vein. Dalmeny’s maiden speech was on the character of his brother Scot, Dundee, and we read that after a long debate he said : “ I think Dundee was a very brave man. His life and death were equally romantic. I therefore give my vote in favour of Dundee.” It proved to be the casting vote, for Claverhouse was approved by 11 to 10. He also argued in favour of Lord Chatham, and we read that “ his polysyllabic arguments occupied 5½ minutes (for a bet).” When Mary, Queen of Scots, was being weighed in the balance, “ Lord Dalmeny then addressed the House

¹ It is interesting to recall that in 1863 Lord Lansdowne’s tutor had urged his father to take him away at Easter, because he would “ treat work lightly, and pleasure as the main object, which Christ Church will set for good ” ; and he was sent to a tutor for the summer before going up to Oxford (*Lord Lansdowne*, by Lord Newton, p. 5).

² I have to thank Mr. D. McKenna, when he was President of the Eton Society, for permission to examine these.

in his usual eloquent manner : he pointed out that there is a great difference between regarding a person with admiration and hatred, with many other wise remarks.” He joined in the unanimous vote condemning Bolingbroke, and when it was asked, “ Was the execution of Strafford unjustifiable or not ? ” Lord Dalmeny, having controlled his risibility, took the opposite side, for the sake of practice, perhaps, in these memorable words. But the presence of strangers of distinction made him forget the arguments he had intended to bring forth. “ I hold that Strafford was justly executed. I cannot but consider him a base apostate—baser and less able than Bolingbroke (Oh ! Oh !) There are some to whom liberty is dearer than life . . . if it had to be done again, I would have it done again.” Boys appreciate “ thorough,” and Strafford was exonerated by 15 votes against 4.

He was more successful in taking away the character of Sir Robert Walpole, both in public and private. Fifteen this time voted against the Minister and but four in his favour. It is noted that “ Dalmeny spoke in his usual vein of sarcastic and cutting wit, making several of the members look very small.”

On subjects of more current interest—he took the part of the North in the American Civil War, and when it was asked, “ Ought England to part with Canada ? ” we read that “ Dalmeny arguing somewhat against his private convictions, said that we ought to keep Canada.” In the course of his speech he said that the Biographical Dictionary had been exhausted in search for characters who ought to be admired. If America desired Canada, he doubted whether it would be well to yield to their pride of conquest. The Americans never cease to revile us, and in a glowing peroration he protested that we must not give up a country which had been gained by the sagacity of a Chatham and cost us the blood of a Wolfe.

The sole record of his interest in the social amenities of the Society is dated a fortnight before he left the school. “ Dalmeny moved that Baily’s Turf Maga-

zine be taken, but on the disapproval of the House, the motion was withdrawn."

As this half ended, a lady wrote to Lady Rosebery :

"I cannot refrain from repeating a passage out of my boy's letter, as it made me feel how good and wise a friend he had found in your grandson, and it will also gratify you. After speaking very pathetically of his sorrow in leaving Eton for ever next Thursday, he says 'Dalmeney asked me to go to the early Communion with him and Wood on Sunday morning; was it not thoughtful of him ?'"

The boy whose mother wrote this was Scott Holland, afterwards the famous Canon of St. Paul's. The third boy was Frederick Wood, the younger son of Lord Halifax.

All his life long he remained subject to the indescribable charm of Eton, as different from that of Harrow as the flavour of first-rate claret is from the flavour of first-rate burgundy. His love never weakened or changed, and it was quickened afresh by his appointment to the Governing Body, and by the entrance to the school of his two sons. To his last days, whatever honours the years might heap on him, he was prouder of being an Etonian—next to being a Scotsmen—than of anything else in the world.

CHAPTER II

RABY CASTLE : AND OXFORD

HE went from Eton straight to Raby, now the home of his stepfather and his mother. Lord Harry had succeeded his brother as 3rd Duke of Cleveland in September 1864, and the great castle where the Nevills had formerly reigned became their principal home. Unlike many mediæval strongholds, Berkeley, Warwick, and Windsor itself, Raby does not tower above a town nestling for protection at its feet, but stands at some distance in a great deer park. On a red October evening, with the stags roaring through the rising mist, it was a stately picture of feudal grandeur. The arrangement by which carriages actually drove into the castle, depositing guests at one end of the great hall and passing out through an archway, was startling and effective. On the other hand, in the days of which I am writing, there was little concession to modern ideas of luxury. Critical visitors shook their heads over the *cuisine* and the cellar, and those who wished to smoke in the evening were relegated to an apartment in a distant tower, in the unmistakable neighbourhood of a well-stocked cheese-room. There was the terrifying possibility for a solitary late-sitter that his candle might be blown out by a gust of wind on his way back to his bedroom, and that he might be marooned till dawn in the great hall, unless he were rescued by a friendly watchman. It was a hospitable house ; and the wide sympathies of both the Duke and the Duchess opened it to visitors of opposing views in politics, and of many varieties of intellectual eminence, in a degree unusual in those more restricted days. Dalmeny, afire with interest in everything that was not commonplace, was prepared to profit to the utmost by

such opportunities ; and although, as we shall see later on, he came to distrust the activities of social diarists, he noted at length some of his impressions of this first prolonged introduction to social life as a young man whose school-days were over. It was early in August, and with a new twelve-bore gun he made his first acquaintance with grouse shooting, on the famous High Force moors, part of which the Duke kept in hand. At first he shot walking with his cousin, Edward Stanhope, but driving was beginning to be fashionable, and he wrote : “ Aug. 16, Wednesday. We shot 83½ brace of grouse (driving), of which I shot about 15 brace, which was very creditable, considering that it was my first day of driving, that my gun would not go off during one whole drive, and that I got the worst place (of course, as the son of the house each drive). Walked to the beat and back. Everyone else rode on ponies.” This was a satisfactory day, as earlier he had written : “ I am not yet an average shot, I fear,” and now, as one of five guns, always on the outside, he had all but killed his fair proportion of the bag on his first day’s grouse driving. It was an augury of his later brilliance as a shot.

When the party returned to Raby, life resumed its even flow, of gentle exercise, family prayers, and regular churchgoing. Both prayers and services were sometimes prolonged, and the fine Nevill tombs in the church were continually inspected : “ The monuments were again looked over. If they are shown every Sunday, I shall be brought to an early grave.”

Visitors came and went, among them Robert Curzon, the author of the delightful *Monasteries of the Levant*, who told many good stories, and “ Mr. Trevelyan,¹ the Competition Wallah.”

August 24th.—“ I had at dinner an interesting conversation with Trevelyan about his books. He hinted at writing his

¹ Sir George Otto Trevelyan, Bart. (1838-1928), M.P. 1868-97, Chief Secretary for Ireland 1882-4, Secretary for Scotland 1886 and 1892-5, nephew of Lord Macaulay.

Uncle's life, but confessed that at present he was absorbed in politics, and felt no great inclination for the task."

August 25th.—" Played at billiards with Trevelyan and took a walk with him afterwards. He told me that he had written two articles in the *Saturday Review*, but that he could do nothing well anonymously, for he did not think it worth while. He promised me the Prince of Wales's autograph and a copy of *Calcutta*. He told me much about his Uncle, and recited to me a passage of *Lake Regillus*, which he thought more like Homer than anything in the language. I asked him if he had lost his taste for Juvenal, taking it for granted that he had one. He said *No*, that he delighted in it, and that his favourites in the Classics were Juvenal and Aristophanes."

This was the beginning of a long and affectionate friendship.

One evening the Duke had to go to Durham to read his Address as President of the Archaeological Society, where "the Duke, the owner of half the County, was introduced to the assembly by Lord Houghton, who has nothing whatever to do with Durham. Lord Houghton did it as ex-President." In spite of this outrage on territorial privilege, my father was a welcome guest at Raby after the meeting, being already intimate with the host and hostess. His acquaintance with the younger generation developed into a close friendship, lasting till his death in 1885, in spite of the difference in their ages of nearly forty years.

A large party at the end of the month included Mr. and Mrs. Disraeli and Mr. Montagu Corry.¹ As these notable actors advanced on to the stage, Dalmeny settled down to a more elaborate record of the day's doings :

August 31st.—" Mama came in from riding when they were all in the library ; so she said, ' I was so sorry to be so rude as not to be here to receive you, but the fact is that I had such a bad headache that I was obliged to go and take a ride.' To which Dizzy replied with an air, ' The pleasure

¹ Lord Beaconsfield's well-known private secretary (1838-1903). Created Lord Rowton 1880. This was Disraeli's first meeting with his famous private secretary of the future.

of seeing Your Grace in your riding habit makes up for the loss of your society'—the kind of compliment in fact that one sees in *Coningsby*.

"I sat next Mrs. Disraeli at dinner. May I have memory and strength to write down some of our conversation. She began by asking me where I was going to. I replied 'Oxford'; so she exclaimed, 'Oh, yes, I love Oxford, they are all so fond of Mr. Dizzy there, they all applaud him so.' So I said, 'Yes, I suppose Mr. Disraeli took an Honorary Degree there?' 'Yes,' said she, 'he was made a D.T.C.L., or something of the sort.' She then asked me if I were fond of reading, and after a little talk, she said that the only novels she liked were those that improved and instructed her. 'I think *Coningsby* is that,' I hinted. 'Of course,' she said, 'written by a clever man like him.' She then gave a long description of her life in the country, how she managed everything, even to ordering Dizzy's clothes—'I have to go out planting, too. I take a little lunch, and some bottles of beer for the workmen, and sit there all day.' 'Is not that very fatiguing?' 'Ah, but the mind overcomes the body,—and then he is so glad to see me when I come back, and he comes out and sees what I have done, when it is all finished, and says sometimes, "This is delightful, better than anything you have done yet." And then I feel quite intoxicated for the moment, and quite rewarded. And though all my friends have grander places than I have, yet they all come to me and see my walks (not rides or drives, but walks) and say, "These are the prettiest walks we have ever seen." And Dizzy sometimes says that he would be quite happy if he lived there alone for the rest of his life; but I say, "No, dear, I will never give you the chance," for it is quite dull in the country when we are alone together, for Dizzy takes his book—he does nothing but read books, old Greek and Latin books) and I take my book, but I am so tired with planting that I am afraid it often falls out of my hands and I go asleep. I never allow Dizzy to come and see me while I am planting, because he would lose the *coup d'œil* of seeing it when it is finished.'

'Do you care for politics, Mrs. Disraeli?' 'No, I have no time, I have so many books and pamphlets to read and see if there is my name in any of them! and I have everything to manage, and write his stupid letters. I am sorry when he is in office, because then I lose him altogether, and though I have many people who call themselves my friends, yet I have no friend like him. I have not been

separated from him since we have been in the country, except when I have been in the woods, and I cannot lose him (here her voice trembled touchingly). He is always at his office, and gives two dinners to his party every week, to which I am not invited. But I know many Whigs, the Duke and Duchess of Wellington, and my dear friend there'—pointing to my mother. 'He is so fond of her, he says she is the only witty woman he knows. . . .¹ How has your sister got her hair done to-night? She is just like Marie Antoinette with her hair like that. She is so beautiful. . . . I am looking to see if Dizzy is sitting next any pretty woman that he would like to sit next and admire.'

"I think this half-crazy, warm-hearted woman's talk is worth setting down, for she is an uncommon specimen. Parts are very touching. . . ."

September 1st.—"Mrs. Disraeli greeted me at breakfast with 'We have been talking about you.' 'I am indeed honoured, Mrs. Disraeli.' 'Oh, but I did not say it was very good.' 'But to be talked about by you is enough honour.' I cannot help quizzing her by talking in this way, though I really like her. She praised me in her own and her husband's name very warmly this evening."

September 2nd.—"After breakfast Dizzy came up and asked me how much we had shot. I said that partridges were scarce and that we intended, therefore, to kill nothing but time to-day. 'Then you have a certain bag.'"

Several walks and talks with both Mr. and Mrs. Disraeli followed during the week's visit.² The recent stay of Lord Houghton probably made him a subject of conversation, in which Disraeli repeated much of the inaccurate and ill-natured gossip which he set down in a memorandum at about this time.³ But

¹ Lady Constance Primrose, *m.* 1867 Henry, 2nd Lord Leconfield.

² "Dalmeny seemed to me very intelligent and formed for his time of life (not yet of age), and not a prig, which might be feared."—*Life of Lord Beaconsfield*, vol. iv, chap. xii.

³ *Life of Lord Beaconsfield*, vol. iii, chap. ii, *Tancred*. They had been intimate for many years, with many tastes in common, and Disraeli always professed a great admiration for my grandfather, Robert Milnes. He had introduced my father, not unpleasantly, in *Tancred* as Mr. Vavasour, and the reason of this increasing bitterness towards him is not clear, either from the memorandum or from this journal. On the other side the response was indifference, rather than any reciprocal dislike.

the great man, to whom eager youth always made appeal, enjoyed amusing his young friend with reminiscence and observation.

“ The first news I ever had of the repeal of the Corn Laws was when I was on a visit to Louis Philippe. . . . So the King one day said to me, ‘ They are going to repeal the Corn Laws in England,’ on which I saw there was business for me, and hurried over to England. . . . Lord Monmouth was Lord Hertford. Thackeray also sketched him, but I think it is a pity to do anything anyone has done before you over again. Besides, Lord Monmouth required delicate touches. Lord Steyne is a mere brutal voluptuary,—not the character at all. For Lord Hertford was a very clever man indeed.

“ Talking of the speakers in the House of Commons, I said that Horsman seemed to me one of the best orators I had heard. ‘ Yes, Horsman is a perfect orator. Some people say that he would not stand wear and tear, but I do not see why he shouldn’t. . . . Lord Derby is a wonderful debater, but when he has to make a set statement I think he fails. I always thought his leaving the House of Commons a mistake.’ . . . We also talked about Lord Brougham, whom Disraeli ran down very much. He professed himself much delighted with his walk and talk. I took in Mrs. Disraeli to dinner this evening—‘ He is so delighted with his walk, and so pleased with you. He is so sorry there is no chance of your being in the House of Commons. He would so like to have some young men like you to follow him. But then you are a Whig.’ ‘ Who told you so ? ’ ‘ He did.’ I will leave a page or two here to put down anything of interest which he said and I have forgotten for the moment.

“ Your stepfather has got the Whigs out of several scrapes when they sorely needed a man of standing and honour to take their side . . . the late Lord Fortescue did the same thing for them.”

He also recorded at length the curious tale of Mr. Pitt *in extremis*, asking for one of Bellamy’s veal pies, which Rosebery set down later when he wrote the *Life of the statesman*.¹

¹ *Pitt, Lord Rosebery (Twelve English Statesmen)*, chap. xiv and appendix D.

Sunday, September 3rd.—“Went to Church. Mr. _____ preached abominably. I never was made so angry by the manner or matter of any sermon, perhaps the manner set me against the matter. In the afternoon I walked with Eliot.¹ He told me that, at the wish of both parties, his father had asked Disraeli and Sir Robert Peel to meet each other. Something went wrong, and they both took a dislike to each other, which lasted for the rest of Sir Robert Peel’s life. He told me that although he had had the mortification of being beaten for Cricklade, yet that after all he had been not so very sorry about it. For he could see that a division must take place in the Whig party on Lord Palmerston’s death, and that he should like to shape his conduct by the course of events.

“In the evening took in Mrs. Disraeli. She told me as a secret that Lord Derby gave hardly anything to the Conservative Election Fund : Lord Salisbury and Lord Lonsdale gave the most ; that they had not had enough money during the last election. . . . Mrs. Disraeli said that she had been present at the reconciliation between Lord Robert Cecil² and Lord Salisbury which took place within the last year, and also at the reconciliation between Lord Robert Cecil and Disraeli. She promised to give me a set of Mr. Disraeli’s studs, which she said she had taken away from him to give to young men that she liked ! ”

September 5th.—“Walked with Mr. Disraeli in the morning. He said that the wonder was how the Conservative party had kept together in spite of the want of patronage. He had only had two Garters to give during the last Ministry. He gave them to the Duke of Northumberland and Lord Londonderry. They had both of them since died, and the Whigs had given away their Garters : ‘But what I regret more than anything is the Lord-Lieutenancies. For they influence the County gentlemen to a great extent. For instance, suppose a gentleman wishes to be on the Commission of the Peace, he makes up to the Lord-Lieutenant by exerting himself for his party. Now we have hardly any Lord-Lieutenants. Lowther³ is Lord-Lieutenant of two, but then he is a very old man. Garters are difficult

¹ (1829–1881.) Succeeded as 4th Earl of St. Germans 1877.

² (1830–1903.) Succeeded his brother as Viscount Cranborne 1865 and his father as 3rd Marquess of Salisbury 1868.

³ The 2nd Earl of Lonsdale.

to give away, for they are so invidious. I hear Lord Palmerston is much embarrassed about who he shall give the next Garter to. He has made very ridiculous appointments already. Then about Peers, when we were in office I proposed to Lord Derby to make four Peers and he agreed. We wished to raise the Order of Baronetage to the rank at present occupied by the Peerage and raise the Peerage. In this the Queen and Prince Consort cordially concurred. We offered the peerage to four persons, all men of about £90,000 a year. . . . We also gave Baronetcies to six men of £20,000 a year or so. There was great difficulty at first in inducing them to accept, but at last they all consented on condition that each other should accept. The Whigs came in and broke the compact. . . . The Duke of Argyll is a clever man but a prig.

“ ‘ Lord Granville is a man of the world, which gets him on. He might have been Prime Minister once, and he ought to have accepted even with a certainty of failure, as it is a great thing to have one’s name on the list of Prime Ministers.

“ ‘ Sir Charles Wood¹ is a first-rate man, etc.’ ”

A third person, overhearing these conversations, might have thought, without incurring the charge of priggishness, that the leader of a great party in the House of Commons, on the edge of the Premiership, could find a better subject of political conversation with a lad of eighteen than the enumeration of peerages and baronetcies conferred mainly because of large fortunes. But the incident illustrates one facet of Lord Beaconsfield’s many-sided character. Nobody would have approved more cordially than he the saying of Southey, an evangelist of Toryism, that “ Your great Whig landowner is a leviathan with the intellect of a dodo.” But he was the friend and guest of one of the principal Whig magnates, and, as this passage shows, only regretted that he could not create more leviathans himself.

¹ Sir Charles Wood, b. 1800, created Viscount Halifax 1866. Chancellor of the Exchequer 1846-52, President of the Board of Control 1852-5, First Lord of the Admiralty 1855-8, Secretary of State for India 1859-66, and Lord Privy Seal 1870-4. Died 1885.

Such conversations as these, and the enjoyment of sport, had not occupied the whole of Dalmeny's time. In the month of August he read all Congreve's comedies, especially noting *The Double Dealer* as a "very amusing and good play," leaving *The Way of the World* without the particular commendation which most readers would give it. He passed on to Wycherley, mentioning four famous plays—"of these I think *The Country Wife* the best. But the wit of all of them is indecency." He also enjoyed Bubb Dodington's *Diary*, and read old volumes of *Fraser's Magazine* and of the *Quarterly Review*.

Except for one or two brief visits in the north, Dalmeny remained at Raby until the end of September, when he settled down at Revesby in Lincolnshire, as one of the pupils of Mr. Warburton, the Rector of the parish. Revesby Abbey was the home of his cousin James Banks Stanhope,¹ so that he was not in a strange land, and his fellow pupils were mostly Etonians. He wrote of them : "I like them all very fairly. It is wonderful how much they have improved since they left Eton," a remark to which no double edge was intended, we may be sure. There was some shooting, and there were guests at the abbey, but there was not much to record during his stay at Revesby. There was the necessary study, but more miscellaneous reading of good literature.

The regular sequence of visits to the beloved grandparents at Dalmeny had been rudely broken so far back as 1861. By that year their daughter Louisa Primrose had become a hopeless invalid, unable to travel, so that, from 1862 until his death in 1868, Lord Rosebery never saw Dalmeny House. The grandson used to spend part of his holidays, usually at Christmas, with his uncle Bouverie Primrose in Edinburgh, so that he never lost touch with his Scottish home. Bouverie Primrose, four years younger than Dalmeny's father, had made an unusual, but very happy, alliance with his stepmother's sister,

¹ (1821-1904.) M.P. for North Lincoln 1851-68.

Frederica Anson. The marriage took place in 1838, nineteen years after that of Anne, Lady Rosebery. The elder sister outlived the younger by fifteen years. Bouverie Primrose remained a popular and respected figure in the Edinburgh world until his death in 1898.

Dalmeny matriculated at Christ Church in January 1866, at the beginning of the Lent term. Etonians of the country gentleman class gravitated easily to "The House," where pleasant society was assured, and there was no undue pressure for distinction in the Schools, though a fair proportion of Christ Church men took Honours. It is clear from Lord Lansdowne's biography¹ that Balliol was considered a safer college for a young man just succeeding to great possessions. Dalmeny was not yet "his own father," as the phrase runs, but his mother would have been glad to see him settled at Balliol. His grandfather was a Cambridge man, but favoured his going to Oxford, on the rather singular grounds that it was not quite so far from Battle Abbey. He must have recalled the posting days of his own youth.

Among the older undergraduates at Christ Church when he went into residence were Lord Harrington, a man of great popularity and personal charm, who died just as he came of age²; the Duke of Hamilton, who had been a playmate of the Primrose children at Nice in 1854³; Lord Warkworth⁴; George Monckton⁵; and Arthur Smith-Barry.⁶ His more immediate contemporaries and intimates were Philip Wroughton, known to his friends as "Peter," later a model country gentleman and county Member; Henry Tollemache, an Admirable Crichton at all forms of sport, who became an approved champion of the agricultural interest in Parliament; Lord Bute,⁷ whose

¹ *Lord Lansdowne*, by Lord Newton, p. 66.

² 6th Earl of Harrington, 1845-1866.

³ 12th Duke of Hamilton, 1845-1895.

⁴ 7th Duke of Northumberland, 1846-1918.

⁵ 7th Viscount Galway, 1844-1931.

⁶ Created Lord Barrymore 1902; 1848-1925.

⁷ 3rd Marquess of Bute, K.T., 1847-1900.



LORD DALMENY AT ETON.



LORD DALMENY AND LORD ILCHESTER
AT OXFORD.

early conversion to Roman Catholicism created a great sensation, and was supposed to have suggested the story of Lothair, though his respected and uneventful life ran on altogether different lines from that of Disraeli's hero ; Lord Ilchester, the chief of the house of Fox ; and last, but by no means least, Edward Hamilton, bringing to Oxford all the best atmosphere of Eton.

It was very much of a hunting set, and included more than one future Master of Hounds. Dalmeny never took to hunting, though he went out once or twice with the Heythrop. Later in life he liked a good-looking hack ; but he was one of the exceptions in an age when even Londoners rode as a matter of course, and when a string of horses could be seen waiting outside either House of Parliament during the session. Some of his friends had, or would have, large fortunes, and no doubt spent too much money. But others carried on, and enjoyed the usual university amusements, including hunting, on moderate college allowances, and it would be an error to regard them as a specially spendthrift assemblage. Like their predecessors depicted by the poet who was at Cambridge forty years earlier :

“ They talked
At wine, in clubs, of art, of politics :
They lost their weeks ; they vexed the souls of deans ;
They rode ; they betted ; made a hundred friends,
And caught the blossom of the flying terms.”

There were two close friendships outside Christ Church : Lansdowne, two years older—whom he found installed at Balliol, and Randolph Churchill, two years younger, who soon became an undergraduate at Merton.

Dalmeny, naturally prone to pluck the flowers as they grew, felt under no obligation to map out a course of academic study for three or four years ahead, with a First in Mods succeeded by a First in Greats as the final palm of victory. This first Oxford

year was unmarked by incident ; in the Christmas vacation he buried himself in the country in solitude, refusing six invitations to pleasant country houses of his Oxford friends, finding the park a swamp, and speaking to nobody but the gamekeepers. He wrote to his mother, December 21st, 1866 : " I have not seen a newspaper since I left London, and for all I know the French may be in London or the Turks in Paris. It is a sort of living death, and I take a grim pleasure in it. It is very good for me to find out how far one can lead a life entirely thrown on one's own resources without vegetating, and I am rather pleased with the result."

In the following spring, March 1867, he set his face southwards. After some sightseeing and play-going in Paris, he made a comfortless journey to Marseilles. " There was a lifelong struggle all night between me and my *vis-à-vis*, a fat French officer, about the arrangement of legs, etc. He had this advantage that he *did* fall asleep, and then his legs were as firm as the rock of Gibraltar." The customary line of steamers had gone bankrupt, so he had to travel on a boat laden with petroleum, which reached Genoa appropriately, as he observed, on All Fools' Day. But he was charmed by a second glimpse of Genoa, which he had once seen in his Eton holidays—" A city of palaces and glowing tints." The steamer struggled on to Leghorn and Civita Vecchia, and on April 4th it was " Naples—at last." But his first grown-up experience of the beloved city was not happy :

" About 11.30 I went off to the Neapolitan Races, which I do not think I shall ever forget. We drove to the Campo di Marte, where, thirteen years ago, I remember seeing Ferdinand II review his troops. It is something to have lived out a dynasty at twenty ! When we arrived at the place my driver motioned me to go and get a ticket for the carriage, on which I went off to get one. They cost three francs. To my horror I could only find two half-franc pieces. I had left my gold behind ! There I stood, hunting in every pocket, among the jeers of the mob (N.B.—This is metaphor-

ical). My driver now began to use strong language, he thought I did not understand the sum required or the coinage of the country. Alas, I knew both too well. I had to use pantomime. I turned my pockets inside out, I held out my hand as if begging. In fact I showed a neat talent for the legitimate drama. I shouted out 'Ho perduto—tutti—tutti,' which I then thought meant 'I have lost all, all.' I have since reason to think that it means nothing of the sort. My driver now became so violent that I began to think of squaring up to him, as he was not a very strong man. At last I pointed in a commanding way to Naples, so we returned for some way. But the driver met a friend. So he now stopped and conversed with the friend, pointing contemptuously at me. At last the friend produced a heap of coppers, and I produced my two miserable half-francs—so we got in. But it was a poor triumph. Two or three times the horse began rearing and kicking. The first time I jumped out of the carriage—but I did not do so again. My jailer motioned me sternly back, and I remembered that I was in pawn for two francs. Whenever my keeper was offered an orange or a cigar he accounted for his having no money by telling the story of my poverty, and little knots of people collected round him frowning at me."

But this was his first and last adventure during a month's stay. He was well looked after by Lady Holland, dining often with her at the Palazzo Roccella, and making expeditions with her and her adopted daughter, Miss Fox, then a girl of sixteen, in the schoolroom.¹ These included the customary sail to Capri, and the ascent of Vesuvius, which the conditions of the moment made more toilsome than usual. He also dutifully visited the different museums and galleries, and under Lady Holland's auspices became acquainted with the social world of Naples. Though his notes contain some happy pictures of scenery, and some acute personal touches, they are less vivid than those that he wrote at Raby. There was no Mrs. Disraeli to banter, no Disraeli to consult as a benevolent oracle. But there was one lasting result in the

¹ This very gifted and charming young lady married Prince Aloysius Lichtenstein five years later, and died in 1878.

conviction that he was unconsciously absorbing that if a man needs an extra home, outside the British Isles, Naples is the one place for it. He returned to Oxford at the beginning of May, "and went to bed for the first time after five nights of railway carriage and diligence." Travellers by Blue and Golden trains should note how their forbears, themselves not despising luxury, made journeys sixty years since.

In the autumn of the same year (October 1867), a messenger from the political world made the first knock at Dalmeny's door. An important neighbour of Raby asked the Duchess of Cleveland whether there was any chance of her son becoming a candidate for the borough of Darlington. Since the death of Lord Palmerston, in October 1865, the outlines of party had become greatly blurred, and the political affinities of some conspicuous politicians were uncertain. Lord John Russell, who had succeeded as Whig Leader, was responsible for the Reform Bill of 1866, which met its Waterloo on June 18th, when by the help of the Anti-Reform Liberals, headed by Lowe, Horsman, and Lord Grosvenor, it was defeated on a crucial clause in Committee by a majority of eleven, some forty Liberals voting with the Opposition. The Tories were in a minority, and the attempts at a Coalition between Lord Derby and the Cave of Adullam Liberals broke down. So a new Reform Bill was introduced by a purely Conservative Government in 1867, and became law, though only after the sacrifice of three important Ministers, General Peel, Lord Cranborne, and Lord Carnarvon, who were unable to stomach the grant of that unrestricted borough franchise which for a generation had been a bugbear to the Tory party. Party lines, therefore, seemed to be ill-defined for the moment; and a young man, who had lived in a tolerant atmosphere, and had not so far been plied with the strong wine of party controversy, might well be excused for wishing to look about him before sitting down to the feast.

He wrote from Christ Church to his mother as follows :

October 27th, 1867.

“ MY DEAREST MOTHER,

“ Many thanks for your long letter.

“ I was very much interested about Darlington. But there are so many things to be considered, that it seems impossible: though there is nothing I should like half so well as to represent Darlington.

“ The first objection is, that though I have no politics, and have never professed any, I am not at all prepared to come forward as a Conservative. Besides the Conservative party has practically ceased to exist, and I think we shall see an entire transmutation of parties before 1869. Anyhow, it is not the time for a young man to commit himself in any way on either side. The next is that my grandfather would probably object, and very naturally, to devote any money which he may fairly destine for his younger children to getting me a seat in Parliament for what might possibly be a very short time. And I should neither feel justified in asking him for money nor my Committee for a subscription. I think the last at any rate an insuperable obstacle; so I shall cease to think of anything of the sort, and if Mr. Surtees ever alludes to it again, please tell him that it is out of the question.”

The political curtain was then lowered for a spell, and the course of Oxford life resumed its easy flow. Moderations were passed “ triumphantly ” at the end of November, and were followed by visits to Blenheim and other country houses. A letter of December 2nd to his mother on the possibility of his going to Dalmeny shows how, at that time, affectionate intimacy with older relations did not prevent formality of access to them, but also throws light on Dalmeny’s shy reserve. “ I have heard nothing from Lord Rosebery, but if he wishes me to go, I shall, of course, make a point of doing so; but no proposal will come from me.”

A few days afterwards he wrote again from London : “ Lord and Lady Rosebery are very well indeed. I never saw him looking so well.” Three months

later (March 4th, 1868) Lord Rosebery died, leaving his grandson two months short of his majority and possession of the estates. Almost immediately afterwards the young man went to Italy for the Easter vacation, this time to Florence, which never engaged his affection as Naples did. He made the rather hasty criticism, "I certainly do not feel to care about the North of Italy so much as the South. The people are so lifeless in comparison, and the scenery round Florence is so comparatively tame. But then I have not seen Fiesole or Vallombrosa."

In the following autumn he paid a flying visit to Russia in company with Lord Bute. St. Petersburg was overpoweringly hot ; a forest fire delayed the train journey to Moscow, so that he had only one day there, "infinitely beautiful to see from the top of a tower" ; and the expense was formidable, he and his companion paying £14 for one extra day's lodging at a St. Petersburg hotel where they only breakfasted and dined : "I went to a Charity Ball the other night, and saw the Cesarevna, who is very charming.¹ I think the husband played at cards with his aide-de-camp in another room."

The year 1869 opened for him with no clearly defined panorama of life extended before him. He had never entirely devoted himself to the regulation studies of the University, although his tutor, Mr. Owen, afterwards said that he had never seen an undergraduate who gave evidence of having read so widely as he had, and fully expected him to take a brilliant First Class in the Honours School of Modern History. William Johnson, visiting at Dalmeny in the autumn of 1868, had written,² "Joab, my host, writes little essays on Luther's times for his Oxford degree, and I look over them critically, touching up the English. He is very clever, and has a peculiar variety of the 'haut ton.' "

¹ Princess Dagmar of Denmark, *m.* 1866 the Czarevitch, afterwards Emperor Alexander III. She became the Empress Marie Feodorovna.

² To Reginald Brett, Dalmeny, 1868.

Rosebery himself was not too well satisfied. Having returned to Oxford for the Lent term, he wrote that one of his cousins was disappointed at only getting a Third Class in Honours—"I cannot see why, as a Third gets him his B.A. without any further examination, and he did not expect a First. If I thought I could get my degree as he has I should be delighted." On the very day that he set down this rather dreary reflection, a second summons to the political arena was being posted, surely a remarkable tribute of confidence in an utterly untried man, still some months short of his twenty-second birthday. This was the correspondence :

Private.

January 29th, 1868.

" MY DEAR ROSEBERY,

" Your very friendly manner to me encourages me to ask you a favour without any preface.

" If you feel sufficient confidence in Gladstone's Government, will you give a proof of it by seconding the Address ?

" The occasion is more important than usual—a new Parliament representing a new constituency about to consider a subject of the greatest interest.

" Yours sincerely,

" GRANVILLE."

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, *January 31st, 1869.*

" DEAR LORD GRANVILLE,

" Many thanks for your kind note. But it has puzzled me a good deal. I cannot be insensible of the flattering nature of your offer : however incapable I feel of seconding the Address in a way either satisfactory to myself or anybody else. But you probably do not know that I am only a resident undergraduate of Oxford working for a pass degree ; and it might damage the Government if, with no counter-balancing quality, the Peer who seconded the Address was a lad *in statu pupillari*.

" I have never yet professed any political principles of any kind ; for I think that when special profession is necessary, it is much better for a young man to reserve it, but my private sympathies and my reason have been wholly enlisted in the Liberal cause for some years : and as in June I must take one

side or the other, I see no use in postponing that choice for a few months, when I have so thoroughly made up my mind, and so excellent an opportunity occurs of making that mind known to you.

“ I can never hope to be of the slightest use to the party, though I should be proud of any opportunity of showing my attachment to its principles.

“ Still I sincerely feel that the fact I mentioned at the beginning of my letter might be a disadvantage to the Government ; so that I feel I must decline your kind offer.

“ I only got your letter to-day. I wish I could have spared you so long a rigmarole as this, plastered with the personal pronoun.

“ Believe me,
“ Most gratefully and respectfully yours,
“ ROSEBERY.”

The political curtain was lowered once more, but there was the degree to be taken, and it is impossible to suppose that this presented any serious difficulty. He was reading some Political Economy with Dean Liddell. And there were other interests and occupations. Attendance at the Oxford Union, which has been the ante-chamber of so many oratorical reputations in after life, was not one of these. It may seem strange that, after his frequent appearances in debate at the Eton Society, he should have never made an appearance on this larger stage. But these things are greatly ruled by fashion, and in some periods at both the great Universities it is not the fashion to attend the Union.

In Rosebery's case personal shyness may have been a further reason for this neglect ; it was one thing to let himself go at the Eton Society, in a small circle of intimate acquaintance, and quite another to address a large audience of university men with whom he had little in common, and most of whom were strangers to him personally. As has been said, he did not hunt, but he sometimes shot pigeons, played racquets, and was fond of driving, though he never took to coaching, as many of his contemporaries did,

becoming afterwards members of the Four-in-hand Club which figured so prominently in the London world. At Oxford dog-carts were in vogue. Rosebery one day was driving Prince Hassan, the Khedive's brother, at that time an undergraduate, when there was one of the mishaps to which two-wheeled carriages were liable, and the pair were tumbled out on the roadside. No great damage was done, but when, not long afterwards, Rosebery offered a lift to the popular Christ Church don, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832–1898), the author of *Alice in Wonderland*, he was met by the Scriptural query, “Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian?”¹ Above all, there was the new and absorbing delight in the interest of a racing stable. The charm of the turf, which has gripped so many, was strong upon him. The taste was not hereditary, for the sport had held no attraction in the past for Primroses or Stanhopes, though at Raby he must have seen the sideboards gorgeous with the gold plate won by its owner's father, the Lord Darlington who was dreaded by his baffled contemporaries as the “Jesuit of the Turf.” The reigning Duke cared for none of these things. Rosebery had registered his colours for flat racing soon after he came of age, which in itself was something of a provocation to the University authorities, and early in 1869 he blossomed forth as an owner. His principal purchase was a three-year-old colt named *Ladas*, by *Lambton* out of *Zenobia*, of which something more will be said later on; and he made no secret of his hopes that, at the very first attempt, he might grasp the prize on which many owners have vainly set their hearts all their lives, by winning the Derby in the coming June, and creating a precedent by leading in a victorious horse at Epsom while still an undergraduate at Oxford. Some thirty years before, John Bowes, destined to secure four Derbys, had owned the winner of the first when he came of age, and appropriately named him *Mundig*. The home

¹ *Exodus*, ch. ii, v. 14.

of Mr. Bowes was close to Raby, which possibly may have fired Rosebery to imitate this remarkable feat. But his forerunner was at Cambridge, and Cambridge, with Newmarket at its gates, has generally looked with a more lenient eye than Oxford on those who attended race meetings. *Dis aliter visum* in Rosebery's case. There was no moral offence in owning a racehorse, but it was an arrant breach of discipline for an undergraduate, as it would have been to obtain a publican's licence, or to open a cigar divan in the manner of Prince Florizel of Bohemia. If he had agreed to postpone ownership of horses, no doubt he might have stayed on, but pride forbade this sacrifice of independence.

So the axe fell. At Easter Rosebery's name was removed from the books, and he ceased to be a member of the University, with no B.A. to his credit. Schoolboys sometimes feel their sense of fairness outraged by finding a mere escapade not less severely punished than some offence which they know to be really heinous. The claims of school discipline are peremptory. But a University can afford to distinguish the *malum prohibitum* from the *malum in se*: so that, two years later, when Rosebery had given proofs of serious interest in life, his name was replaced on the books of Christ Church. In 1872 he came up for a college "Gaudy," occupied his old rooms in the Canterbury Quad, and returned thanks for the House of Lords. No whitewashing could have been more complete.

But his departure, though not ignominious, was in no trailing cloud of glory. One who knew him well at Christ Church writes that "his influence was always on the side of law and order," while many of his harum-scarum contemporaries were in continual conflict with the authorities. The famous "statue" row, in which some of them were implicated, took place after Rosebery had gone down. The same friend adds, "While he was universally liked, he was not one who at any time had many bosom friends,

possibly because he was intellectually immeasurably superior to all his contemporaries.” Also, perhaps, because the aloofness which had marked him at Eton, as has been told, still existed at Oxford ; and because simpler minds were sometimes puzzled by his ironical turn of banter. He was of middle height, or slightly more, strongly built, with a depth of chest to which the range and flexibility of his voice bore witness. It was not the figure of a horseman, or of a long-distance runner, but he was capable of much endurance, and could outwalk most people. “Just Eton boys, grown heavy,” wrote Praed, in the most attractive of all reminiscent poems of school life.¹ Rosebery thickened somewhat, without ever becoming corpulent, and those who knew him through life, looking back on those days noted fewer physical changes in him than in most of their friends. His features were regular, with little play of expression, except when they were lit by a singularly radiant and fascinating smile. The eyes were remarkable. Light blue, and inclined to prominence, they were at times altogether expressionless, like the eyes of a bird. This gave an air of inscrutability, and sometimes of lack of interest in the surroundings of the moment, which many people found formidable. Few realised that they were witnessing the regular discipline of a nervously impulsive nature, at first studied, but becoming almost instinctive. When the charming smile broke out, the air of mystery vanished altogether.

In his Oxford days he was clean-shaven, except for the short side-whiskers which were then common. In a few years these disappeared and he remained beardless. It was easy to picture him in the dress worn before the French Revolution. To his relations, and to one or two of his closest friends, he was “Archie.” To his Christ Church allies he was “D,” and by that initial they always addressed him to the last. His handwriting, which was neat from the first, was in his boyhood on at least the average scale.

¹ *School and Schoolfellow*.

It was not till he was leaving Oxford that it began to diminish, and it was some few years before it assumed the exquisite characteristics which it maintained for as long as he was able to govern a pen.

Now the world was all before him, where to choose. He had been a singularly conspicuous figure both at Eton and Oxford, without having tried to win either the academic or the athletic crowns which mean fame at school and college. Anxious mothers would soon be telling their boys at public schools how the sons of some of their friends, such as Lansdowne and Morley,¹ were already started on the steep ascent leading to distinction in public life. Would Rosebery be such a one, or would he use his freedom only for pleasure? To himself, one may be sure, no such Choice of Hercules presented itself. Good literature, Blue Books, and the Racing Calendar all had their uses; there was no hurry, and he fully intended to extract the best from them all. But it certainly seemed to some people that—

“ . . . The busy elves to whose domain
Belong the nether sphere, the fleeting hour ”

were beginning to get the mastery of him. His uncle Bouverie wrote a letter which might be taken as a model for such an intervention. Without a tinge of sermonising, he spoke of the intense attraction of racing, and of the uncertainty which constitutes one of its fascinations. It was the friendly warning of an older man, not a lecture.

It was not until August 1868 that there were some restricted celebrations of his ownership at Dalmeny. Old Lady Rosebery was detained in London by her daughter's illness. His mother and sisters were in the south, and Everard was in Ireland. “ All is, I am thankful to say, well over,” he wrote, “ and it is a comfort to think that the laws of nature prevent

¹ Albert, 3rd Earl of Morley (1843–1905). Under-Secretary for War 1880–85; First Commissioner of Works 1886; Chairman of Committees, House of Lords, 1889–1905.

anyone coming of age twice." In the same autumn another old family friendship brought about a personal relation destined to influence Rosebery's public life during the next twenty-five years above and beyond any other. Mrs. Gladstone wrote in October that they were going to have a little dance in the house the next month, and hoped that he and his brother might possibly be disengaged. She had just missed him at Raby the other day, when Mr. Gladstone and their youngest daughter were there, but having known his mother so long, she felt that they ought to make acquaintance. So that Rosebery's first approach from Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone was not a request that he would help to pass measures through Parliament, but that he would come to tread measures in the drawing-room at Hawarden. In the previous year he had spent three days at Hughenden, and had several hours of walks and talks with Disraeli.

Racing was becoming a serious interest. A colt named *Ladas* first carried the rose and primrose colours in the Derby of 1869, starting at the odds of 60 to 1 in a field of twenty-two runners, and finishing last. It was a sad failure; all the worse that loud trumpets had been sounded about the colt's merits, and it was to be feared that all Christ Church had backed him for the Derby. There was little success otherwise, and in the result the whole lot went up to Tattersall's for sale on November 1st. Of the seven yearlings sent up none reached their reserves. Their owner may not have been altogether sorry, though he must have wished to repair the losses of a poor year, because Admiral Rous, the Jupiter Tonans of Newmarket, had happened to mention that interest in racing, unless corroborated by ownership of horses, would not be enough to secure a young man's election to the Jockey Club. In the result Rosebery was chosen for that body in the autumn of 1870.

Such a recruit could not but be welcome at Newmarket. What Whyte Melville's heroine described

as “the slang aristocracy” in a phrase which now sounds prehistoric, had just lost its leading hero in the Marquess of Hastings,¹ who had died in 1868, leaving little behind him save a reputation for careless good nature and shrewdness in the business of racing, joined to a capacity for lavish expenditure which would have dissipated a far larger fortune than that which he inherited as a minor.

But the famous old town by no means regarded itself as a mere shrine of reckless frivolity. Without harking back to the days of Rockingham and Grafton, there was certainly no incompatibility between devotion to racing and the pursuit of high politics ; though at the moment a direct connection had almost ceased for the time being.

Lord George Bentinck was but a memory ; Lord Palmerston had died in 1865 ; Lord Derby had quitted office early in 1868 and was to live but little more than a year longer ; General Peel had resigned from the War Office and from Parliament when the Reform Bill of 1867 created a fissure in the Conservative party, surviving only as an honoured Nestor of the turf. But Lord Granville, one of the Liberal leaders, belonged to the Jockey Club, and had occasional interest in a racing stable ; while Lord Hartington, who had entered Parliament in 1857, was carrying on, in his easy, unostentatious way, alike the political and the sporting traditions of his famous house. Nor were the frequenters of Newmarket, old and young, by any means a set of Squire Westerns and Tony Lumpkins. Admiral Rous, its undisputed autocrat, had cut a brave figure in the Navy, and sat in Parliament ; George Payne, as completely the “ gay

¹ Lord Rosebery was always interested in the career of Lord Hastings, whom he just failed to meet. He had fancied that the character of Sir Harry Scattercash, in his favourite *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour*, must have been drawn from “ Harry Hastings ” ; until he realised that Surtees's book was published in 1853, when Lord Hastings was a boy of eleven. It was asserted that until the final crash of *Hermif's Derby* in 1867 he was well in credit on his racing and betting account ; but there is only one end to the finances of a man who treats his winnings as income and leaves his losses to take care of themselves.

companion and the favorite guest" as ever Sir Robert Walpole can have been, wasted excellent talents with unfailing geniality, and steadily resisted the prayer of all Northamptonshire that he should sit for the county; Henry Chaplin¹ and James Lowther² industriously pursued in Parliament the careers which, later, were to be rewarded by high official promotion; and the presence of such men as Lord Suffolk,³ Lord Rosslyn,⁴ and Gerard Sturt,⁵ enriched a brilliant and amusing society. Its feminine element in those days was small in number, but attractive and conspicuous in several aspects. There was "Lady A." Maria, Marchioness of Ailesbury, kind of heart and deep of voice, taking her racing as seriously as she took her evangelical religion. There was the compelling charm and leadership of the Duchess of Manchester.⁶ There was the brilliance of the Forester sisters, Lady Chesterfield and Lady Bradford. These were all riding or driving on the Heath, as in those days everybody did, before any

¹ (1840-1923.) M.P. 1868-1916; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1885-6; President of the Board of Agriculture 1889-92; President Local Government Board 1895-1900; cr. Viscount Chaplin 1916. The well-known owner of *Hermit* and other good horses.

² Rt. Hon. James Lowther, 1840-1904. M.P. 1864-1904; Parliamentary Secretary to Poor Law Board 1868; Under-Secretary for the Colonies 1874-8; Chief Secretary for Ireland 1878-80.

³ Henry, 18th Earl of Suffolk (1833-1898), affectionately known to a large circle of friends as "Dover" from his earlier title of Viscount Andover. His contribution to the Badminton Library on *Racing* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1886) would do credit to an author of greater pretensions. The figure of Lord Olim Juvabit, in one of his vivid sketches of past days at Newmarket, may well have been modelled on the Rosebery of the 'seventies.

⁴ Robert, 4th Earl of Rosslyn (1833-1890). Witty and scholarly, something of a poet, and a personage of unequalled *désinvolture*. My father described him as "One of the few people in the House of Lords who can read and write."

⁵ Henry Gerard Sturt (1825-1904). M.P. 1847-76; cr. Lord Alington 1876. A conspicuous figure on the turf, in a partnership with Sir Frederick Johnstone which twice won the Derby. Lord Granville formerly had a share in some of his horses. Lord Beaconsfield christened him "the champagne of society."

⁶ Countess Louise von Alten, m. first, the 7th Duke of Manchester, second, the 8th Duke of Devonshire.

stands for visitors existed. Lady Stamford¹ and Lady Cardigan,² Peris kept outside the conventional pale, may have enjoyed themselves as gaily as those who were within it.

In 1870 Rosebery went abroad again, this time with some Eton and Oxford friends, Edward Hope, J. H. Mossop, and J. Shafto. During this sojourn of nearly three months in France and Italy, he kept a journal on a more careful and elaborate scale, which fills a fairly stout quarto notebook. There are humorous accounts of discomforts and mishaps of travel; serious appreciations of works of art; a very few political reflections; and a continual flow of good-natured chaff directed at his travelling companions.

This last feature is a little difficult to understand, unless he intended to circulate the diary in one form or another; but this, apparently, was never done, and the jocular passages must have been sketched in for his own enjoyment. After a week at Nice, with some visits to Monte Carlo, where Rosebery restricted himself to watching the losses of his English friends and acquaintances, the party coasted on to Genoa, where their morning slumbers were disturbed by salutes fired in honour of the birthday of Washington, which evoked the reflection that “the sound of cannon is always pleasant. One is bound to speak with rapture of the possible advent of a universal time of peace, when leopards and lambs shall run about in couples, and a cockatrice’s hole be such a desirable residence: but I have a secret feeling that life would lose much, at least, of its outward grace and splendour.” They passed on to Florence and its galleries :

“I do not know if after all I like any picture much better than Michael Angelo’s *Parcae* in the Pitti. The bridge across the river, which makes the communication between the

¹ Wife of Harry, 8th Earl of Stamford (1827-1883). Rosebery knew Lord and Lady Stamford well, and was often their guest at the famous shooting parties at Bradgate and Enville during his unmarried years.

² Adeline de Horsey, second wife of the 7th Earl of Cardigan, the cavalry leader (1797-1870), to whom she was married in rather irregular fashion. She was the niece of Admiral Rous.

Uffizi and the Pitti, is filled with the most beautiful tapestry I ever saw. Much of it is worked with gold thread, to give the metallic gleam to the cuirasses and jewels. There is one piece representing the Morning, which gives the gladness and profusion of the light with almost as much force as Guido's picture. I think that nothing teaches you to appreciate a good picture like seeing the copy lying in front of it, the one hard and tawdry, the other mellow and alive. I found one of the copyists explaining to a group of well-dressed Italians (and highly educated, as they understood the French of the Lecture) the astounding fact that Michael Angelo was not merely a painter but a sculptor, and not merely a sculptor but an architect. The Italians listened open-mouthed."

Rome was reached late in February. It was not Rosebery's first visit, for he had been there at Easter 1864, and he had stood by Keats's grave in the inspiring company of William Johnson. This time he found a polished, and perhaps rather *précieux*, English and American society, with whom he went on the sightseeing round. But he was not entirely dependent on such guidance. He was alone at St. Peter's on Sunday, February 27th.

"As soon as I got up, I went to St. Peter's to hear High Mass. It lasted about two hours, and in the middle of it there was a great procession. These processions are extremely effective, owing to the fact that in the enormous nave you can see the great procession winding about all at once, and to the brilliancy of the colours. The effective part of the service to me is the congregation. Instead of our pews and glossy hats and chignons and neatly got-up lodge-keepers to represent an intelligent and prosperous peasantry, you are elbowed here by real want and poverty and squalor, to whom the Church is the only Home: and it is a home to them at all hours, however splendid it may be. Gibbon called St. Peter's the noblest edifice devoted to the worship of a Deity, and yet the congregation was not at all noble or even respectable in the ordinary sense of the word. There were a great many Zouaves, but there seemed to me to be a still greater number of wild-looking beings in rags and tatters, praying with passionate earnestness, to whom the services of

the church were living realities. Nor did it seem to occur to them for a moment that their souls were of less value than those of the very beadle. To them the portion of wine and wafer borne in procession were undoubtedly God's Body and Blood, and the sight of it threw them into a sort of religious ecstasy. One man I can recall in particular. He was a fine picture in himself, and off him I could hardly take my eyes as he knelt next me. I have been much flea-bitten ever since."

A little later on he dined with Bute and met Monsignor Capel, the brilliant Churchman who was reproduced in *Lothair* before his unhappy fall from grace.

"I talked a great deal with Monsignor Capel. He would not hear of secular education, and considered Forster's Bill the best that could be obtained under the circumstances. He told me that Manning was absolutely alone with his nominee Cornthwaite, the Bishop of Beverley, in supporting the infallibilist doctrine. The petition was presented to them this day fortnight, or at least to the English Bishops, for signature, and all, with these two exceptions, refused their concurrence. The Catholics, he said, in England, looked up to two Bishops for guidance—Ullathorne, very senior and an encyclopedia,—Clifford, a great canonist, and the representative of the old Catholic families. These two were entirely opposed to the dogma. Manning is very unpopular. This was all told me that I should spread it. I have therefore kept it to myself, but give it here for what it is worth."

He was by now forming a definite conception of comparative values in art, though neither then nor later did he ever assume the airs of a professed critic.

"This morning we all went (in the great family coach I have hired) to the Farnesina Palace. It did belong to the King of Naples, but, like almost everything else, he has been forced to sell it. There is an entrance hall surrounded with magnificent frescoes by Raphael. The figure of one of the Graces in this series with her back turned is held by some to be the finest female shape in the world. Whether that be so or not, the frescoes are extremely beautiful, and show that Raphael was as great in representing the heathen divine

as the Christian divine—two essentially distinct types, of different though hardly unequal majesty. Where you have Jupiter representing merely kingship predominating over a variety of puissant deities each representing some primitive and original power, the idea to me is as sublime as any Christian conception. It is only where the heathens represent him, in their inability to realise perfect justice united with perfect mercy, as the slave of successive and contending fits of weakness and uxoriousness and wrath, that the idea appears wanting in unity and divinity. The face of Zeus is the face of a supreme god, but that will never be realised on canvas. In the Christ of Raphael's *Transfiguration*, incomparably the finest figure of a divinity that I have ever seen, and the Christ of Correggio in the same collection, which seems to me to come next to it, you have divinity but not unalloyed with mortality. Christian art, as has been said, is inadequate to its subject ; but pagan art was also inferior, and both from the same cause. In Raphael's Christ the face is worn with the cares of ordinary life, and the anguish of a Divine Essence condescending to a sordid humanity, and though it is lit up with an unearthly love and an immortal compassion, mortality is not absent from the conception. In Correggio's Christ, the God, it is true, has freed himself from his humanity ; the cere clothes are around him, but not of him, they are below and behind, and the accompaniments of his victory rather than the witnesses of his inferiority. The face wears the gladness of triumph but not the complete resumption of divinity : the cloud of Cherubim glows with a perfect and heavenly joy, but it is rather over the empty grave than the entered Paradise.

“ What this remarkable rigmarole has to do with the Farnesina Palace I am at a loss to conceive. In the room next the hall there is a fine fresco of Galatea by Raphael and a head in charcoal by Michael Angelo, which pleased me immensely. I cannot say now that I like Michael Angelo better than Raphael, but he is a great force.”

He visited practically every gallery in Rome, and was enraptured by the portrait of a woman in the Sciarra Gallery—

“ the most beautiful woman in the world, by Titian. I remember her as a child in my mother's copy, then as soon as I had enough money I bought a print of her, and to-day

I had the rarest pleasure I have experienced in Rome of seeing her face to face. I know of no face that touches it in point of dignity, depth and expression. And to relieve the apparent coldness of the face the painter has thrown in a southern warmth of colour, which brings into more forcible contrast the still gravity of her expression. Fortunately these women do not exist in real life, as they would make fools of the world."

On raving about this picture to a lady " who had seen it but too many others on the same day," he was chilled by finding it mixed up in her mind with the picture of Beatrice Cenci. " I met the same lady in the Borghese Gallery, and in the evening asked her if she did not admire Raphael's portrait of Cæsar Borgia, to which she replied with much feeling, ' Yes, she has a sweet face.' "

He had an audience with Pope Pius IX : " He gave me the impression of being the incarnation of what the French call *bonté*, a word for which I know of no English equivalent." So the pleasant days went on : sometimes there were torrents of rain, sometimes the Tramontana blew. The Comte de Montalembert, the most eminent of Gallican Catholics, had just died, and a Requiem Mass to be said at the Ara Coeli was suddenly forbidden, to the great excitement of French sympathisers ; but on the following morning the Pope unexpectedly ordered it to be said at another church, and attended in person behind a *grille*. " This has not stopped a single mouth, nor altered to anyone the signification of yesterday's act, except by adding to it a character of petulance and feebleness."

Towards the end of March Rosebery started for his adored Naples. He was welcomed at the Club by many Italian friends, and each page of the journal shows how happy he was to be once more at the place of his choice. There was a " breakfast " of more than a hundred people at Castellamare, given by a Neapolitan princess for the Prince and Princess of Piedmont,¹

¹ Afterwards King Humbert and Queen Margaret of Italy.

where theatricals, dancing, and illuminations lasted far into the next day. Soon afterwards his companions went home, and he paid a short visit to Palermo, which he duly admired without endangering his loyalty to Naples, whither he returned for a spell of sultry weather, leaving again for Rome in the middle of April. There he came in for the Easter celebrations at St. Peter's, and for the Benediction of the crowd from the lofty balcony of the Cathedral. Like all who ever heard it, he was amazed at the powerful and distinct intonation with which the Pope uttered his blessing—for the last time, as it proved to be—“and so the World and the City were blessed on the seventeenth of April eighteen hundred and seventy.” He went out on the Pincio to watch the illumination of St. Peter's dome, half dreading to spoil the splendid impression left from his Eton days, and finding that he was now not less entranced than he had been then. Rome had not ousted Naples from his affections, but he was deeply sensible of the wonder of the city, both in its past and its present. Later in the year (October 3rd, 1870), he wrote: “How curious it is that in this year of horrors and prodigies the, perhaps, most wonderful event of the century—the occupation of Rome by the Italians—has passed as unnoticed as a gipsy encroachment on a parish common.”

They journeyed homewards by Pisa and Spezzia, and by *vetturino* along the Cornice, passing each night at some spot on that delicious coast, free at that season from the crowd of winter travellers which would seem so exiguous to-day. They reached Paris on April 25th—“To-day I heard the terrible news of the massacre in Greece.¹ Poor Fred Vyner.” This was no light blow. Rosebery was on terms of close friendship with all the Vyner family, the brothers

¹ A party of eight tourists, including two Secretaries of Legation, British and Italian, visited Marathon on April 11th. They were captured by brigands, and after a series of negotiations, miserably conducted by the Greek Government, four of the party, including Frederick Vyner, were shot in cold blood.

Clare, Frederick, and Robert, the sister Lady de Grey,¹ and the mother Lady Mary Vyner,² from whom he had received the utmost kindness. Mrs. Robert Vyner was the sister of his travelling companion John Shafto.

He was in no hurry to embark on the political course for which he was destined by general opinion—partly, no doubt, owing to that very opinion. His days were well filled, and he passed many evenings at the opera and at the play. During the years 1869 and 1870 he did not attempt to speak in the House of Lords, though he attended occasionally, and in the latter year voted for the Bill to permit marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

Later in the same session he found a debate on the affairs of Greece “very feeble and unsatisfactory.” But it is not until February 1871 that he really started. Lord Granville, undeterred by the collapse of his premature attempt two years earlier, again in warm terms invited him to second the Address in answer to the Queen's Speech. The mover was Lord Westminster,³ who had succeeded two years before to the family honours.

There were domestic questions of moment, such as Army Reform and the Abolition of University Tests, but all were overshadowed by the Franco-German war, in which the German victory was already assured, while peace still seemed to be far off. To this subject the greater part of Rosebery's speech was devoted, though he also touched on the Alabama Commission, on the Repeal of University Tests, and on elementary education in Scotland. The following extract shows that he had to some purpose framed his periods on eighteenth-century models :

¹ Married, 1851, Earl de Grey, afterwards 1st Marquess of Ripon.

² Daughter and co-heiress of Thomas, 2nd Earl de Grey, d. 1892. Her four sons were Clare Vyner, 1836–1882; Reginald Vyner, 1839–1870; Robert Vyner, 1842–1915; and Frederick Vyner, 1847–1870.

³ b. 1825, succeeded as third Marquess 1869, created Duke of Westminster 1874.

“ I know of nothing in history so grand as the manner in which, when her armies had melted away like snow before the sun, when her fortresses were beleaguered, when her Executive was either captured or fled, when all, in fact, that represented civil organisation or war-like power had vanished, Paris, who for eighteen years had given up herself to luxury and deified pleasure, came forward to endure bombardment and famine and death, in order to become the nucleus of the defence of France. For four months she held on, she fed her population of epicures on husks and rats, yet there was little repining and no crime. . . . And now, at last, there is an armistice,—an armistice, let us hope, that will ripen into a durable peace. Meanwhile we have seen the King of Prussia proclaimed Emperor in the Palace of Louis the Fourteenth. The warmest good wishes of this country must go forth to the new Confederation ; the warm wishes of this country will be to see this historical Empire prove that she cannot merely conquer, but also use her conquests with magnanimity, and that when this disastrous war is concluded she may use her great power in the interests of peace and civilisation.”

“ What shall we say of France ? ” he went on. He professed his faith in the destinies of this great country, that she would look back with thankfulness to the crucial trial from which she emerged to a higher and purer state of liberty than she had ever known. He believed that we should live to see France far greater in the councils of Europe by moral authority than she ever was by her armies.¹

The speech was well received : he himself noted privately, “ Great congratulations, very ill deserved.” The Duke of Richmond exceeded the conventional congratulations always offered by the Leader of the Opposition, speaking of “ the conspicuous ability of the seconder.”

¹ In the previous autumn he had written to his mother : “ I have, like you, every sympathy for the French army. But at the same time one thinks more highly of the Prussians than we did. They make war *en grand seigneur*. They do not pillage and they treat their prisoners like their own men. It is a great change from Blücher.” Alas, there was another great change to follow, years later—William II from William I.

Lord Granville had secured his important recruit, who was encouraged to try his wings more than once during the session. He asked for papers on the Greek massacres of the previous year by which he had been so closely touched, speaking of "that body which was inaccurately called the Greek Government." He had also, for some time past, been exercised by the occasional abuses of lay patronage in Scotland, and he quoted in the House of Lords (May 9th, 1871) the instance of his neighbouring burgh of Queensferry. There the Council of nine members included seven who did not belong to the Established Church, with the result that they appointed Mr. ——, who was drawing large audiences to his lectures in the principal towns of Scotland, and described himself as a person endowed with remarkable wit, eloquence, and pathos. He did not say that there was sufficient cause for objection against Mr. ——, but he believed that if St. Chrysostom had been appointed in this manner he would have had an equally unfavourable reception. A rather heated debate followed, as happens when ecclesiastical matters are discussed in Parliament. A like atmosphere prevailed when he intervened for the last time in this session on the University Tests Bill, which excited the clerically-minded to a degree which now seems barely credible. He was brought into the first of many collisions with Lord Salisbury by his opposition to clerical fellowships, based on the ground that they exposed poor scholars to the temptation of taking Orders. The imputation was exactly of the sort to bring out Lord Salisbury's sting. There were three sorts of gossip at Oxford, he explained—those of the common-room, the under-graduates, and the scouts. Rosebery's facts came from the third source. Lord Granville, winding up the debate, complained of this bitter retort to a speech remarkable for point and for general ability.

CHAPTER III

SCOTLAND: THREE VISITS TO AMERICA

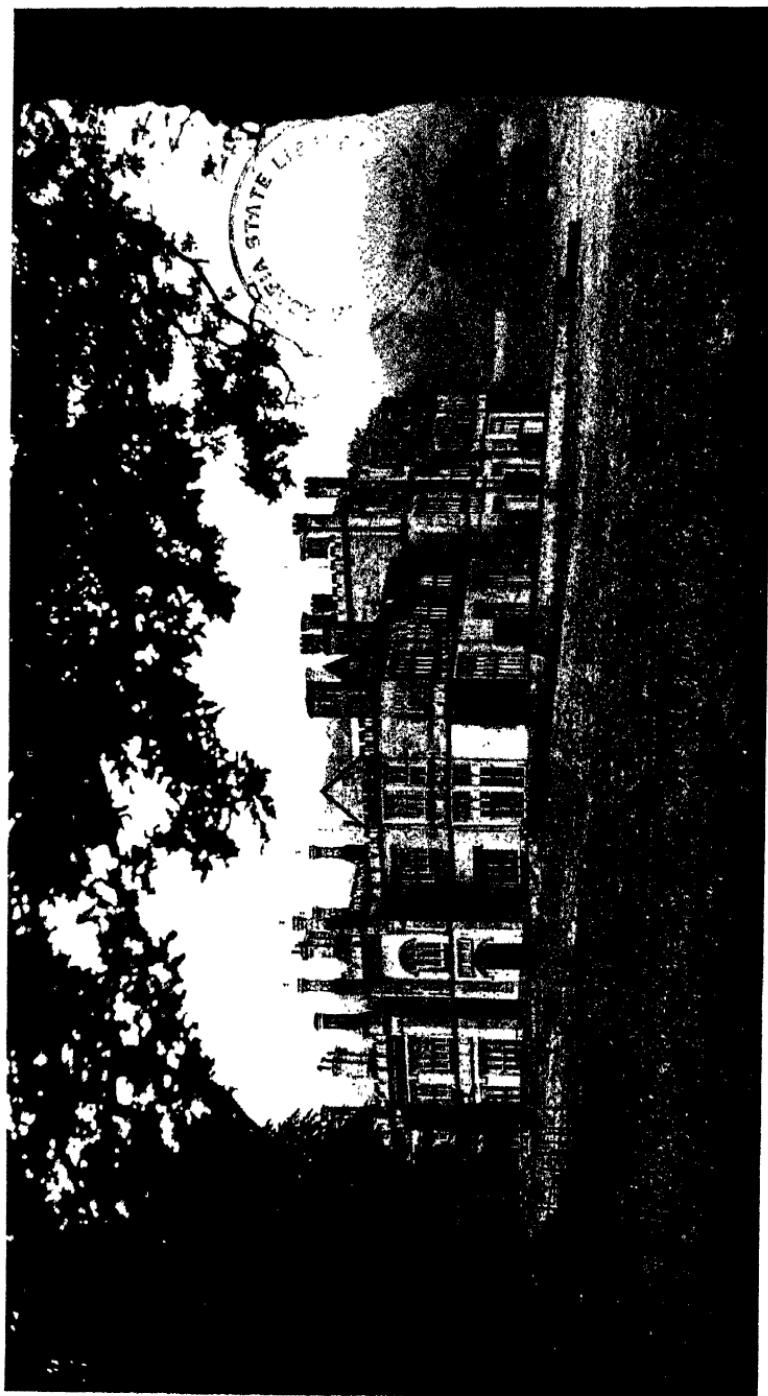
DURING the years which followed his accession to the family estates, Rosebery did not allow the pressure of London, of Newmarket, of English country-house life, or of foreign travel to divert his mind from his Scottish homeland. The inherited property there covered some 21,000 acres in Midlothian and Linlithgow, including the shooting-box of Rosebery, near Gorebridge. There was also a moderate revenue from mines of shale not far from Dalmeny itself. As he admitted when, towards the end of the decade, he brought his bride to Dalmeny, he "had been hitherto somewhat of a roving bachelor," but, nevertheless, he made more public appearances in Scotland than anywhere else. The house of Dalmeny, at which he kept the modest establishment of an uncertain resident, was left in the simple condition which it had worn in his grandfather's time. It was built in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, to take the place of the ancient castle of Barnbougle, of which more will be said later. This was an ivy-mantled ruin when Rosebery succeeded. Dalmeny House is a castellated building of the type familiar in Scotland, where succeeding generations clung to the traditions dating from the French Renaissance, when the two countries were united in common mistrust of England. Standing near the entrance to the Firth of Forth, it looks out on the small islands that break the monotony of the sea-line. The park is charmingly broken into a series of vales and dells, while the size and luxuriance of the timber, both in the open and in the coverts, tell how the harshness of the east coast has been mitigated by the contours of the bay, and by the semi-insular character of the

points projecting into the Firth. In spite of its nearness to Edinburgh, Dalmeny remains singularly retired to this day. When Rosebery went there, years before the Forth Bridge was dreamt of, he could fancy himself to be the hermit whose lot he sometimes thought so enviable.

But his native land did not encourage him to adopt a monastic rule of silence. At his coming-of-age banquet thirty-six speeches seem to have been made, of which he had to deliver five, acknowledging enthusiastic tributes to absent members of his family besides the toast of his own health.

In 1871 the Scott Centenary at Edinburgh collected Sir William Stirling Maxwell, Lord Houghton, who was Rosebery's guest at Dalmeny, and a Scottish lettered circle. At the interminable feasts of those days, it was the custom to conclude the entertainment by asking the exhausted company to drink the toast of "The Ladies." This was generally entrusted to a youthful guest, who was expected to treat it with refined jocularity. Rosebery was the victim this time, and finished his speech by hoping that everybody present would silently drink to one, or at most two, of the opposite sex. If not, he trusted that "the short remainder of the night would be spent by him in an agonizing nightmare, in which the ghost of Jenny Geddes would appear to him with her irrepressible footstool." This was better stuff than the audience would have heard as a rule; but it was a poor use to make of Rosebery's faculties at a Scott banquet, and it is not surprising that he privately noted it as "a ghastly ceremony."

His next appearance at Edinburgh was more worthy of his powers. He was invited to address the Edinburgh Philosophical Society at the opening of its session in November 1871. Its rather formidable title did not prevent that important and representative body from inviting men of distinction to enlighten it on subjects of historical and general interest; but the orators were usually far more than twenty-four years



DALMENY.

old. Rosebery chose the Union between Scotland and England as his theme. His easy grasp of it helps to confirm his Oxford tutor's hopes of his place in the Honours School of History. The debt to Macaulay is traceable, but only in the style, for Macaulay's *History* does not reach the momentous years from 1704 to 1707.

Rosebery realised that he was lecturing, not writing an essay or a history, so he did not dwell on the long negotiations for a treaty in which his ancestor had played a notable part; but he drew some vivid portraits of leading figures in the drama—the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Belhaven, and Fletcher of Saltoun. The sketch of the final negotiations is concise and masterly, as is the series of reflections on the losses and gains which fell to Scotland from the Act of Union, and on the slow processes of reconciliation between the two countries. The peroration shows how the political leaven of the moment was working in his veins, inspiring some thoughts not actually germane to the subject, but irresistibly rising to the surface of his discourse.

“ One word more, and I have done. Our ancestors put their hands to a mighty work, and it prospered. They welded two great nations into one great empire, and moulded local jealousies into a common patriotism. On such an achievement we must gaze with awe and astonishment, the means were so adverse and the result so surprising. But we should look on it also with emulous eyes. Great as that Union was, a greater still remains. We have in our generation, if we would remain a generation, to effect that union of classes without which power is a phantom and freedom a farce. In these days the rich man and the poor gaze at each other across no impassable gulf; for neither is there in this world an Abraham's bosom of calm beatitude. A powerless monarchy, an isolated aristocracy, an intelligent and aspiring people, do not together form the conditions of constitutional stability. We have to restore a common pulse, a healthy beat to the heart of the Commonwealth. It is a great work, the work of individuals as much as of statesmen, alien from none of us, rather pertinent to us all; each

in his place can further it. Each one of us—merchant and clerk, master and servant, landlord and tenant, capitalist and artisan, minister and parishioner—we are all privileged to have a hand in this most sublime work of all ; to restore or create harmony betwixt man and man ; to look, not for the differences which chance or necessity has placed between class and class, but for the common sympathies which underlie and connect all humanity. It is not monarchs, or even statesmen, that give to a country prosperity and power. France in 1789 had a virtuous monarch and able statesmen. But the different classes of the community had then become completely estranged, and the upper crust of society was shivered to dust by the volcano beneath. In this country the artificial barriers which separate class from class are high enough, but, thank God, they are not insuperable. Let us one and all prevent their becoming so. A great page records the bloodless and prosperous history of the Scottish Union. A greater page lies vacant before us on which to inscribe a fairer union still.”

His mother, the daughter of one historic house, and married into two others, was quick to notice one phrase in these concluding sentences, and did not hide her disapproval. Rosebery stuck to his guns, which do not nowadays seem to be charged with very high explosive. He wrote to her a few days later (November 24th, 1870) :

“ I am very much flattered by your having read my address, but I do not conscientiously think it worth the trouble. But the phrase to which you object, I stick to. I never said or hinted that where the heart of the aristocracy is touched, or on a great crisis, the aristocracy do not do their duty. But I maintain, and no Liberal can say otherwise, that the House of Lords is isolated in sympathies from the country. And I say that no Liberal can say otherwise because the House of Lords rejects those measures which the country, through its representatives, has ratified. On that ground therefore I hold that I had a perfect right to use the word ‘isolated.’ At the same time no one can deny the noble qualities and individuals of the aristocracy. But you say that ‘Men are not better esteemed in other classes for depreciating their own.’ I am not sure that I have depreciated my own, but

whether that be so or not, it seems to me that your argument strikes at the very root of political morality. I hope it will be long in England before people act or speak merely to please a class or classes.

“Forgive my long rigmarole suggested by your letter which opened a new light to me, as I did not think that anyone had taken the same view of the expression.”

At a time when Local Government, outside municipal areas, was not yet fully organised, it was natural that Rosebery's desire to lend a hand in some national task should drive him to active participation in Scottish educational movements. He had taken no part in the debates on the English Education Bill of 1870 ; but from 1871 onwards he was in continual request north of the Tweed as chairman and speaker at anniversaries and other educational associations in anticipation of the corresponding Scottish measure in Parliament. As everybody knows, Scotland has long stood in the foremost rank for rational and efficient conduct of the nation's teaching, from the village school to the university. In no field has the *perfervidum ingenium* found finer scope than here. Here Rosebery, eclectic as he was, could find work which he felt to be really worth doing. At one end of the scale were such institutions as the United Industrial School at Edinburgh. Here he presided in 1871, 1872, 1876, and 1877. It was an institution framed on the lines of the ragged schools, for which the conscience of England had been awakened by Lord Shaftesbury and other generous agencies, including the novels of Charles Dickens, leading to the passage of the Industrial Schools and Reformatory Act of 1854. One special element in the situation made particular appeal to Rosebery's mind. Owing to the influx of Irish families into Edinburgh, dating from some fifty years back, a heavy percentage of these indigent children were Roman Catholics. In the first instance, it was arranged that all children should be handed over for one hour each day to ministers of their parents' faith for religious instruc-

tion. In such an institution as this the controversy which has always raged over this solution—whether religious teaching should be given in the school building and within compulsory school hours—did not arise ; but it was disapproved by some, who held that a Presbyterian country could not admit the propagation of error in a place of public education. Each year Rosebery set himself to combat this view, and to plead the cause of the Irish Catholics.

“ I do not believe in the charity which meets two ragged children in the street, which asks them what their religion is, and when one answers, ‘ I am a Catholic,’ and the other answers, ‘ I am a Protestant,’ says, ‘ Come home, little Protestant, and take your porridge ; but as for you, little Catholic, you may die or starve or emigrate, it is no matter to me. I do not agree with any of the articles of your dogma, and therefore you may be left to your own ways and your own doing.’ That, as I have said, is in my view a very narrow spirit of charity.”

When the Education Acts were passed, he was able to point out that industrial schools were intended for those who could not be reached by the School Board, and that, although in those schools they considered it not merely a matter of efficiency but of respect to religion that religious education should be separated from secular education, yet in that larger sphere of education in public schools they had to remember that it involved the issues of justice to the ratepayers, who supported these schools, and the relation generally of the State to the various forms of religion.

When the Scottish Education Bill was before the House of Lords (July 16th, 1872), he moved an amendment in Committee, forbidding the teaching in any school of any Catechism or any religious formulary distinctive of any particular denomination ; while admitting that the “ religious difficulty ” in Scotland was not to be compared with that in England or Ireland, he pointed out that, besides the one-seventh

of the population opposed to Presbyterianism, the United Presbyterians were in favour of complete separation of secular and religious education. The Shorter Catechism, therefore, was not welcome to everybody, and yet it was certain as a rule to form the sole subject of religious instruction. It was a powerfully phrased argument, but the proposal was naturally unacceptable to the House of Lords, and it was negatived without a division. Rosebery was at pains to show that he set himself in no opposition to the Established Church, or to the Shorter Catechism. In his grandfather's time Dalmeny had not been a Presbyterian house, and, as a rule, an Episcopal clergyman had read the service in the dining-room on Sundays : but the family attended kirk from time to time, and the form of worship that he shared there continued to make particular appeal to one side of his character.

Later in the same year (September 29th, 1872) he was given the Freedom of the Burgh of Queensferry. There he spoke at some length on the claims of agricultural labour and the formation of agricultural unions. But he soon plunged into the education question, defending generally the recent Scottish Act, and specially rebutting the charge of injustice to teachers. “We must remember that the ancient Scotch schoolmaster, if I may so call him, after the passing of this measure, was like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved and unremovable practically ; in this dignified position and very solitary state that though they were unremovable the parents of the parish did not sometimes consider them fit to teach their children.” But he again deprecated the provision made by the Act for religious education. He desired to see religion a separate and careful subject of instruction by the Church and parents of the child, the lay teacher taking no hand in it whatever.

He developed the same thesis in the following year, at a meeting in connection with the Edinburgh School Board election (March 26th, 1873), arguing

powerfully against two local schools of thought, one favouring the adoption in Scotland of what was known in England as the Cowper-Temple Clause, permitting only “simple Bible teaching,” the other desiring this plus the Shorter Catechism.

“Those for whom he spoke threw religion on governmental or accidental agencies : they threw it, in the first place, on the Church, Established or Voluntary ; in the second place on that great army of Sabbath-school teachers, which had been such a blessing to Scotland ; in the third place—and he was not sure it ought not to have been the first—on the parents ; and in the fourth place, on the people of Scotland themselves.”

Once again, he addressed, as President, the inaugural gathering of the Glasgow Public School Union, which designed to “unite all parties in a policy undisturbed by theological considerations.” Over a thousand people attended, and the religious teaching prescribed by the Act of 1872 was again his main topic. Rosebery’s long and witty speech was principally devoted to the personal position and the declared policy of some local advocates of religious instruction by lay teachers.

In the autumn of 1873 Rosebery crossed the Atlantic for the first time, reaching New York on September 30th, after a fine passage, “altogether very good fun,” and arriving in the midst of a brief but violent commercial panic. “The surest sign of the times was that at the Manhattan Club fifty dollars more was spent on one of those evenings for drinks than had ever been known before. Now the panic is over.” He was appalled by the price of everything, and feared that “the Scotch peerage would soon come to an end in New York.”

In a flying visit to Canada he was the guest of Lord and Lady Dufferin at Ottawa, where he noted :

“Canadian oratory is of extraordinary length. What would the House of Lords say to one whole sitting of a great debate being taken up by two inferior speakers ? For seven

hours did they deliver themselves, and I who heard them am as well as can be expected. . . . One evening a Canadian gentleman asked me what I thought of the debate. 'Well,' I said, with a sort of sigh, 'the speeches were rather shorter perhaps—' 'Never mind,' he said briskly, mistaking the cause of my sigh, 'you will have some much longer to-morrow ! ' "

He was greatly struck by the charm of Quebec, thinking it like Edinburgh, with its fortress crown. He was also impressed by the overflowing attendance at the Catholic churches in Quebec, adding: "Oddly enough, though the population is chiefly composed of French Catholics, the Sunday in Quebec is the most rigidly observed in the world. Not an apple stall may be open. There is an old French law against it."

On his return to the United States he enjoyed some varied experiences which are best narrated from the notes which he made at the time. In other countries, but most of all in America, the particular brand of shyness that puzzled many of his compatriots did not affect his bearing either in the company of his intimate acquaintances or among strangers. He sprang into easy popularity there, and established some lasting ties of affectionate friendship. The closest was with Samuel Ward, "Uncle Sam" to a host of Americans, and a man of wide knowledge and great personal charm. He was a scholar and a poet, whose *Lyrical Recreations* were distinguished and thoughtful, though none of them attained the splendid sweep of his sister's¹ "Battle Hymn of the Republic." He was extraordinarily well-read, and was perhaps sometimes guilty of the foible of omniscience; for some of his livelier New York friends insisted that his declared devotion to the charms of the Differential Calculus was based on reminiscences of his youth, rather than on any recent employment of that mathematical method. A brilliant marriage into one of the great

¹ Mrs. Julia Ward Howe.

New York families had not turned out happily. He had friends in many European countries and followed their political excitements with almost the same interest that he gave to those of Washington. These last, however, were, in a sense, his business, for he was a notable "lobbyist" of the Democratic party, and obtained all the repute, or disrepute, attaching to that profession. Intensely open-handed, he was almost a Leigh Hunt in money matters. Rosebery noted : "I asked Sam Ward what he would do if Providence were to bestow on him a third fortune, say of a million sterling, to-morrow. 'Why,' said Sam, 'appoint three trustees at once, and have myself declared a lunatic : otherwise it would all be got out of me in a week.'"¹

Sam Ward's closest friend in America was William H. Hurlbert, the editor of the *New York World*, a brilliant journalist, and a man of infinite humour as well as of many solid attainments. He married happily late in life, and afterwards spent much time in Europe. His last years were clouded by a scandal which, if the charges had been proved, would have pointed to a mental degeneration like that which disfigured the old age of Walter Savage Landor. His wife stoutly maintained that he was the victim of a wretched error ; and he passed the rest of his days peacefully in Italy, by no means deserted by his old friends.

In a letter full of hints about the United States, dated August 18th, 1873, the Hon. F. Lawley, a cosmopolitan figure on the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*, wrote : "Hurlbert—the most distinguished and visionary journalist in the United States. Now connected with the *New York World*. A man of immense but erratic information : a charming talker : a little mad." The last phrase is illuminating.

Rosebery had always been a clubbable man ; not

¹ His nephew, Marion Crawford, introduced a life-like sketch of him as "Uncle Horace"—Mr. Bellingham, into his pleasant novel *Doctor Claudio*. Longfellow, who was much attached to him, said that at past seventy he was the living example of the Greek adage, "Those whom the Gods love die young," because he would never grow old.

in the way of spending idle hours in the palaces of Pall Mall and St. James's Street, but in the sense of enjoying small, intimate *symposia* where good talk reigned and good wine was opened. He, "Uncle Sam," and Hurlbert formed one of the smallest possible—the "Mendacious Club" of New York—of which they were the sole members. Sam Ward was the "President," Hurlbert the "Liar," and Rosebery the "Sycophant" of this select corporation. A photograph exhibits the three in the correct guise of honest and truth-telling townsmen.

A close ally and frequent *convive*, though not a member of the "Mendacious" party, was Mr. Evarts. In addition to his eminence as a former Attorney-General and as a constitutional lawyer, he was a man of wide knowledge and real wit. And he had the gift, not less socially precious, of saying absolutely irrational things without moving a muscle of his very expressive face. Some of these have survived to this day, as when some serious person asked him whether it could really be true that Washington, in his youth, had paid a debt of a dollar by throwing a coin across the Potomac. He thoughtfully replied, "Well, you must remember that money went a great deal further in those days than it does now." And when asked about a dinner at the White House, where President Hayes had anticipated the national verdict of two generations later by establishing a rule of total abstinence, he answered simply: "It was an admirable entertainment in every way; water flowed like champagne." To the gay companionship of this coterie one contributor was Mr. John Sutherland, proprietor of the famous restaurant at which all the choice spirits of New York foregathered, where he was not only "mine host," but the friend of everybody. There was also the pleasant home life of some of the New York families, particularly of the William Butler Duncans, at whose house on Staten Island Rosebery was a frequent guest. He became a close friend of the whole family, and in 1867 he attended the

wedding of Miss Jessie Duncan and Mr. Wilton Phipps. Mr. and Mrs.¹ Phipps afterwards settled in England, and their intimacy with Rosebery and his family became lasting.

Some of the experiences of his first visit are best recorded in the notes which Rosebery made at the time. He was greatly impressed by Salt Lake City, where a wilderness had been turned into a smiling cultivated land by irrigation and sheer hard work. He attended a Mormon ball, at which he was the only Gentile. It opened and closed with prayer, according to the fixed habit of associating every act in life with public devotion.

“ Brigham Young told me that it was a physiological fact that polygamy produced finer children than monogamy. I must say I never saw more beautiful children than I did in Salt Lake City.

“ The Mormons do not now ask strangers into their houses, or at least very rarely. This is owing to the unfair way in which those who were admitted published their experiences. Elder Clawson said to me that Hepworth Dixon was very anxious to see his family, so he admitted him to supper there, but had no idea that Dixon would publish all their domestic details. Dixon’s book they evidently consider discourteous: as they furnished him with every document and every opportunity for his book, they laid themselves bare before him and consider that he was at least indiscreet, besides being offensive in tone. However, they speak of him with their customary mildness. Nor do they admire Sir C. Dilke, his travelling companion. George A. Smith, the second man and historian of the Church, told me that Dilke came to his office and asked him innumerable questions and took the answers down in writing, making the gratuitous statement that he did not intend writing a book. Yet afterwards he wrote a book, suppressed this evidence, and inserted all sorts of idle Gentile tales.

“ Joseph Q. Cannon also complained. A man—an American—with whom he became pretty intimate told him his desire to be admitted into a Mormon household. Cannon asked him to supper in a few days. Meanwhile he found

¹ Now Dame Jessie Phipps, D.B.E.

in an eastern (New York) newspaper personal letters about the Mormons and about the lives and manners of those the writer had met intimately. He traced them to his would-be guest, whom he excused himself from receiving, showing the newspaper as his reason. The guest and correspondent muttered some excuse and disappeared."

On his return eastward he noted several conversations with people of importance in different lines of life.

"I met Dr. Holmes this evening at dinner at Mrs. Winthrop's. He is a small bright man with a mobile face and a kindly expression. There was a good deal of book talk to which he warmed a good deal—and was delighted when I broke in with my fondness for Gray's 'Elegy' which he said Webster desired to have repeated to him when dying. . . .

"He was full of horse talk (which Winthrop introduced) and has seen Plenipo's Derby. He asked about the amount of breeding required in a hunter, and if the neighbourhood of Boston seemed suitable for hunting. He was full of that mysterious American jargon 'a horse low down in the twenties.' He talked about galloping poems, into which he would not admit Longfellow's 'Revere' and Tennyson's 'Six Hundred,' confining himself to Browning's 'News-bringing to Ghent' in which he said one could see each horse do his particular style of going, and Scott's 'Lochinvar.' I told him of Doyle's poem on the St. Leger which he had never heard of but which I must try and find for him."

Senator Charles Sumner (November 9th, 1873).—"I sat for two and a half hours with Senator Sumner to-day in his lodging here at Coolidge House opposite the Revere House. He was in his dressing-gown. With a large head looking larger from a shock of grey hair, a large nose with broad nostrils, a powerful mouth with a pleasant smile and honest false teeth, his only weak facial point may be said to be his eyes which are small and close together. . . .

"He had been much struck by a conversation at Chevening in which Macaulay, Bishop Wilberforce and others took part, in 1858 or 9. They all gave the palm to Gladstone as the first orator of the House of Commons, and Lord Harry, as he was then, alone maintained Bright to be superior.

"He spent 10½ hours at a sitting in November 1872 talking alone with Bright, which was pretty well for two invalids."

December 3rd, 1873.—“I sat next to Sumner at dinner at Sam Ward’s and we conversed for three or four hours.

“He did not care for Bolingbroke, though he once had greatly admired him and made a pilgrimage to the Château of La Source, his temporary residence when in France.

“No English speaker of this century, not Canning, could have equalled Daniel Webster’s speech (which was his best) in reply to Colonel Haynes. We should have to go back to Burke for its equal, whose two magnificent speeches on conciliation with America and on Economic Reform were Sumner’s delight.

“He had read every word of Rousseau and made a pilgrimage to Les Charmettes : the care of which was, he said, one of Napoleon’s first orders on attaining power. He found the pompous entry of his death at Chambéry. He delighted in parts of the Confessions, but appeared to have had a devotion to Rousseau in early life and to have recovered from it.”

Senator Thurman (December 3rd, 1873).—“Later in the same evening Senator Thurman of Ohio the present leader of the Democratic party described Calhoun’s speaking as being as close and as hard as a mathematical demonstration, and his delivery being rapid he required a very close attention. Figures he seldom used and then failed in them.

“The finest piece of speaking Thurman had ever heard was Daniel Webster’s speaking (off-hand) in an encounter between Webster and Reverdy Johnson.

“He described with great zest the quarrel which he heard between Andrew Johnson and Jeff Davis, both future Presidents, and as such subjects of impeachment.”

A. T. Stewart.—“Stewart the immense millionaire who can tell you the value of any article in his prodigious warehouse, told me that Homer and Horace were his favourite recreations. He said that at one time he used to regret the seven years he spent with the classics (I believe he was a schoolmaster) as having been lost to the production of wealth, but he knew better now.”

President Grant.—“Grant told me at Mrs. Admiral Porter’s ‘German’ that he had shaken hands with over ten thousand people in a day. Arithmetic stands aghast.”

Longfellow (November 23rd, 1873).—“Longfellow was very genial and unaffected at the breakfast he gave Sam Ward and me. He is an older man than I expected to see but he has recently aged, Sam told me. He mentioned having

recently looked into Campbell's later poems written in old age, and said sadly and emphatically that they were a great warning.

"He spoke up for sermons and said that he liked sermons to be sermons and not lectures. He said he had heard a very good one by chance when he was staying at the Peacock Inn at Rowsley in Derbyshire, a delightful old Inn which he urged me to go and see. He showed me with great reverence a bit of Dante's coffin. He seemed to enjoy the good things of this life, brought out a bottle of champagne with great gusto and enjoyed his wine and cigars."

Prosperity in America.—"The most conservative country in the world is America—as regards prosperity. Almost everyone has the means of living with some comfort, there is therefore less envy and less desire to disturb the existing order of things than in those old states where the domain of the noble is surrounded by an indigent peasantry, and where there are two classes—those who own principalities and those who own nothing. The policy of the millionaire in England is to isolate himself and weaken his natural supporters by buying out all those who are less wealthy than himself, thereby making himself a more conspicuous object of attack, converting the friends of property into its foes and making apparent to every mind the pitiless rapidity with which humanity is being divorced from the soil. Lord Overstone *may* be secure and *may* buy up Berkshire with impunity: the more splendid fortune of Astor is certainly secure."

American Republicanism.—"I think it might fairly be alleged by an enemy of American republicanism that fortunes are as large, that luxury is as great, that wealth is as insolently displayed in America as in any European monarchy. The marble palace of A. T. Stewart is not the ideal abode of a republican. But such reproaches would miss the point. In America a man is none the better for these splendours, but rather the worse. Liberty indeed is allowed for extravagances which injure nobody, but it is a contemptuous liberty. In Europe a man is made noble by his house and his retinue: in America such a man could only be noble in spite of them."

General Hurlbert and Ben. Butler (December 5th, 1873, Washington).—"These two dined with me to-night.

"I asked what were the mutual feelings of the two armies in the late war.

"General Hurlbert told a story of how he ordered an attack

and the picket officer remonstrated because the two sides had agreed that it was damned nonsense going on firing at each other when they did not feel any anger: so they had declared a truce for half-an-hour. The general then proceeding along his line to find out if this were true on the railway track which formed his outpost, found his two sentries playing euchre with the two Confederate sentries. ‘Well, men, what are you doing there?’ ‘Guess we’re giving these rebs a damned good hiding, we’ve got everything out of them except their rebel notes which we won’t have at any price.’

“The conscription in the South was exceedingly severe, in the North it was nil. Most of the draughted men from the North ran away. General Butler shot one man who had deserted more than once, re-enlisting and receiving 800 dollars from his township each time.

“General Butler occupied a position near Richmond the lines of which were on a bluff overlooking Dutch Canal, 200 yards from the rebel lines. They never took any notice of each other in a hostile way, but if the order was given to fire along the line would shout out ‘Look out Yanks’ or ‘Look out jolly rebs’ so that the targets might retire out of fire.

“General Butler used to go and survey the place regularly with his staff. On one occasion he took a man with a tall (chimney pot as we call it, stove pipe as the Americans call it) hat. On which a Confederate officer shouted out, ‘I’ve seen all you fellows peeping over here for weeks and never minded a bit, but that stove pipe hat is a touch too much: if that doesn’t disappear I fire.’ The hat disappeared.

“Lincoln came down in his usual rusty black to review the troops once. He rode on Butler’s right between the General and the enemy. The troops cheered all along the line, but the Confederates, though they stood out gazing at the important arrival, never fired a shot.

“‘Do you remember the 20th May?’ said a Confederate to General Butler. ‘Of course I do.’ ‘It was,’ he added to us, ‘the day that Beauregard tried to break my lines.’ ‘Well that day I shot at you seven times with a telescopic rifle: were none of your staff shot?’ An orderly was killed.

“‘How was it,’ I asked with an apology, ‘that your generals acquired their science?’

“‘There was no science,’ said Butler. ‘From ’40 to ’60

I camped out with the Massachusetts Militia for five days a year—that was all my training.'

" ' It was all hard bushwhacking,' said Hurlbert. ' I carried a musket in the Florida war, that was my preparation. I never was at West Point.'

" Bushwhacking, I discovered, is tree fighting : by which any European army, they say, would be defeated in America.¹

" ' If a war were to take place to-morrow we could put 700,000 veterans in the field. If we had to fight Spain to-morrow and only took men who had served two years we could raise 300,000 men,' said the General.

" ' At the close of the war,' said Butler, ' we had fourteen hundred thousand men on our rolls. There were, North and South, eighteen hundred thousand men under arms. It was the biggest thing of the world after the French Revolution.' "

Growth of America.—" ' In twenty years,' said Butler, ' we shall own all America from the Northern extremity to Darien : including, I beg your pardon, Canada. We shall then be as compact as the old states. It took Washington three weeks to march from Boston to New York. He could have made the journey in seven hours. It is a great and new experiment. We cannot tell how it will turn out. The Roman Empire fell to pieces because it kept its citizenship restricted. Wherever we go, every inhabitant becomes a citizen ; there is the difference.' "

English.—" ' Forty years ago,' said Butler, ' the purest English in the world was spoken in New England, where nothing was read but the Bible and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Milton and possibly Shakespeare for those who were inclined to read poetry.' "

Washington.—" Washington, according to Butler, desired his style as president to be ' Serene Highness.' At his table he once expressed this desire. One of his friends, a Judge, said, ' That would be all very well for you, General, but how would it do if you were succeeded by our friend here ? ' a gentleman who was almost a dwarf. Washington never forgave the Judge.

" When he went up to the Capitol he went in a coach with six white horses and outriders.

" There are undoubtedly descendants of Washington. When

¹ On the other hand, Lord Wolseley, who had visited the Southern front, was convinced that at any stage of the war the addition of one army corps from any of the best European armies would have turned the scale in favour of either side.

he went to Church (according to Cox) he was preceded by a drum and fife.

“ Bancroft Davis showed me a portrait of Washington in the State department, which he said is supposed to be the best. Those by Stewart are believed to have been flattering.”

Byron and the last Lord Holland.—“ Sumner told me that he had heard that Byron had been very fond of the last Lord Holland who was lame like himself. ‘ But,’ said Byron, ‘ how well he carries it, he seems only to have tripped against a star.’ ”

Lafayette and Washington.—“ Sumner dwelt long on his project of writing on the touching friendship that united Washington and Lafayette. He said that nobody had any idea how tenderly they loved each other who had not gone deeply into the matter.”

Disraeli.—“ Cushing and Sumner agreed that Disraeli’s preface to his father’s *Curiosities of Literature* was the best thing he had written, and according to Sumner was one of the most touching pieces of writing and one of the tenderest tributes in all literature.”

Speaker Blaine.—“ Speaker Blaine told me that his immediate ancestor was in the ‘ Forty-five ’ and after Culloden fled to America. He afterwards fought in the Revolutionary War in America, remarking, with great satisfaction, ‘ What a wonderful bit of luck to have had two shies at those damned Hanoverians.’ ”

Religion.—“ I cannot pretend to say if the Americans are a religious people (as the cant phrase goes) : but I have certainly never seen a nation so given to building and attending churches.”

Notes.—“ Everything in America appears lean and nervous compared with our robust solidity : look at the men, the horses, even the locomotives.

“ There are in America no ruins of antiquity to which they can give sentiment or affection, so they cherish and beautify the industrial objects which form their pride and their means of support : their steam engines and their fire machines are as dainty as crown jewels : their manufactories are often splendid piles—their shops are sometimes marble palaces. There is something very noble in this. In other countries men are too apt to steal down like conspirators to the dingy dens whence they make the fortunes which they display elsewhere. The American, on the other hand, is

proud of his work : he links himself to it, while he idealises and decorates it—like the old Venetian merchant princes, and in so doing he dignifies his calling and himself.”

Dilemma of American Traveller.—“ When one returns to England one finds oneself in a neatly constructed dilemma. If you say you dislike America, the answer is ‘ Ah, I knew you would be shocked when you saw your principles carried into practice : you see what Liberalism would bring us to.’ If, as I did, you say that you are greatly pleased with America : ‘ Ah, I thought you would be delighted at their toadying to you : they always do make so much of a lord.’ ”

Rosebery could not resist sending to his friend’s journal this impression of a torchlight procession for the Democratic Convention, before the Presidential Election of 1873 :

Torchlight Procession, for the Democratic Convention before the Presidential Election, 1873 :

“ Last night I stood in Madison Square, and looking down Fifth Avenue there appeared a moving column of lights, clustering and silent. It might have been a squadron of angels marching to encounter the power of darkness. But as it came nearer I saw that it was a great army of human beings proceeding in silence and order to salute their chief.

“ The cause, the manner and the surroundings were equally impressive. Along the streets a dense impassive crowd watching with curious respect : the traffic suspended out of deference to the embodiment of so much conviction and so much power : a hush of expectation and critical curiosity : not a policeman to be seen.

“ The object of all this interest was a host marching with the precision of veterans, but they were neither the old Guards of Napoleon, nor the Praetorian legionaries of a Caesar ; they shewed neither the disdainful ferocity of an Eastern bodyguard, nor the sullen fury of the Jacobin Clubs : they called for neither blood nor gold. There was cavalry indeed, but it was unarmed, there were banners but they bore the names of peaceful citizens or the shibboleth of political principles, there were cannon, but they were loaded only with ballot balls. All was silence, earnestness and decorum. It was a monster procession of American citizens on its way to salute a political chief.

"To a native there may be nothing remarkable in this. To a foreigner like myself it was a triumph of moral power. Many an American will say as I have heard it said that these men were paid so much a night. It may be so : I can only reply that we would gladly in my country pay twice as much to have such an exhibition.

"It was not the mere numbers though they were impressive enough ; it was rather the sign of a civilisation which could not as yet be found in Europe. There was, apparently, perfect sobriety : in my country there would certainly have been no such aggregation of human beings without much drunkenness. There was perfect order without the intervention of the police : in my country there would have been tumult, disorder and a great force of constabulary. Traffic was suspended as if by universal consent, yet there was no word of complaint : it seemed natural to all that private convenience should give way to so great a manifestation : in my country private convenience would have struggled greatly to have its way and would have greatly complained.

"But, more than this, how much must have been sacrificed, time, labour and money to produce this result. The men must have been trained for months, for they marched as soldiers march. Instead of rushing about as is the way elsewhere in times of political excitement to make political centres of themselves, they were satisfied to merge their own individuality in the great mass. There was no anxiety to assert a fitful personality by the delivery of speeches. Though many had to wait long before it became their turn to march, and though the fatigue to many must have been excessive, there was nothing but patience, good humour and alacrity. And all these qualities were displayed in honour of certain principles, and of men who must have been mere abstractions to the vast majority of those who were present : for there was probably not one in a thousand who would have recognised the object of his enthusiasm.

"I venture to say that this was both a great moral spectacle and a great political lesson. No European potentate, not the Queen of Great Britain saluted by the thunders of her fleet, not the Emperor of Russia reviewing his hundred thousand Guards before breakfast, not the Pope borne amid smoking incense and the blare of the silver trumpets and the awful silence of kneeling multitudes can produce a sight so impressive as this."—FORESTIÈRE.

“ The problems presented by this country are :

- “ 1. Size—no republic has ever been carried on on so large a scale.
- “ 2. Difference of races immigrating.
- “ 3. Difference of races as affected by variety of climates.
- “ 4. Differences of the interests of the various regions.
- “ 5. Increase of luxury and expenditure.”

In November 1874 he made a second, shorter trip to America, coming in for the Democratic triumph of the election, and finding in consequence that the South offered greater attractions than the West, which had been his original destination. He found Savannah (December 5th, 1874)—

“ the most heavenly place except Naples which I have ever seen. Fancy a little city of 30,000 inhabitants, with its streets so lined with forest trees that, looking down the road, one sees a glade and not a row of houses ; in which each of the many squares is a shady grove where standard magnolias twenty feet high and more grow by the public way, where the private gardens are thickets of camellias white with flowers and orange trees yellow with fruit, where the sandy roads make the city so quiet that the stillness is broken by the song of birds, where the air is the breath of early morning and the sun is the sun of our summer, and all this on the 5th of December. A little way out of the town there is a place called Bonaventure, formerly the seat of an old English family who planted it out in avenues of oaks. The place is now deserted, and the aisles of overlapping branches with the delicate semi-tropical moss hanging down like snow wreaths look like the naves of ruined cathedrals or the approaches of some sacred sepulchre. I do not know that I ever saw anything so singular in its mournful beauty, and they say that when moonlight shoots the branches and lights up the grey arches the effect is indescribably wild and solemn. Would you not like, as I wish, to live at Savannah, and be buried at Bonaventure ? The city has bought it for a cemetery, for which it is all the more suitable that it is too unhealthy to live in.

“ From this I go on Monday to the rice swamp inhabited by Chandos Leigh’s brother Jim, who married Fanny Kemble’s

daughter. It is the place at which Mrs. Kemble wrote her book on South America, and I am curious to see it.

“ How thankful our generation ought to be that it was born too late to be intimate with Mr. Charles Greville. I have a holy horror of a diarist which you indeed instilled into me when I was a—(I have just killed a mosquito) child. A man who feels bound to write something and makes a confidante of his journal is subject to every human meanness. But I have not read the book. I only judge from the extracts that I have seen that it must be a sort of posthumous anonymous letter.

“ In Annapolis I saw a very painful portrait of Lord Chatham, wigless and in the costume of a Roman Senator, which, by the way, does not suit his legs. He is pointing to a statue of Liberty and looks unhappily like a lean and slippered pantaloons (only without the pantaloons).

“ In Baltimore there is a much more curious relic. In a single bedroom without a carpet sits an immensely wealthy old lady who is sister-in-law of the first Napoleon—Jerome’s American wife by whom he had several children. She is said to have been so wonderfully beautiful that when she went to her banker’s in England they had to let her out by the side door to escape the crowd which was gazing at her. Jerome, when recalled to Europe, brought her with him, feeling sure that the Emperor would sanction the marriage if he only had five minutes’ interview with her. Napoleon seems to have held much the same opinion as he refused to allow her even to land. Years afterwards she met Jerome in a picture gallery. He at once exclaimed ‘ Madame Paterson,’ and turned to her, but was hurried away by his companions. She has now turned miser, and intends like Monsieur Thiers to live, considering it more a question of will than anything else. Her son who is now dead was strikingly like Napoleon, they say, but the grandson whom I have seen, though handsome, has nothing of that type about him.”

New Orleans followed. He had been told that half the country between California and New York was under snow, so congratulated himself on being in the sunshine.

December 16th, 1874.—“ But even had my first plan been practicable, I should not have done so well as in coming here, for the South is the Poland or Ireland of the United States.

This place is at this moment in a great ferment, and fighting is expected in the streets next Sunday, as the election returns should then be made, and are expected to be fraudulent. If so our Whites will 'chaw up pretty smart' and 'unpleasantness' accompanied with shooting will take place. The Governor is very much in the condition of an Irish landlord. He has to live in strict seclusion guarded by the police. If any popular excitement is shewn he retires like contraband whiskey into the recesses of the Custom House.

"I have just received and looked through Greville's Memoirs. It would have been better, I think, to have delayed their publication, but their suppression would have been a very great loss. I wonder who is doing the same ungrateful duty for the present generation. . . .

"The people are still very French and you hear French spoken in all the streets : but I believe it is not very classical (like the Canadian French) and is popularly called 'Gumbo French.' They have a quarter to themselves. On a hot afternoon the quay gives one something of the same impression as Naples, as it is thronged with noisy, careless, good-humoured, ragged people ; the great difference here is that they are negroes. The curious reflection to me in looking at them is that they are citizens, voters and sovereigns."

Christmas was spent in Cuba (December 25th, 1874) :

"I do not know how to begin about Cuba, or how to end, everything is so new and so enchanting, except, by the way, the wild beasts. For on arriving here last night just after we had sat down to supper, a scorpion, three inches long, appeared and began to walk deliberately down the table while I gazed at him as if he were the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*. The cockroaches, too, of great size and activity, are rather depressing. But I am going into the country to-morrow, and am promised greater delights than these—large hairy tarantula spiders, the size of a hen's egg, snakes as thick as my wrist and jiggers. . . .

"The house is very much like a house at Pompeii only ten times as large, and we live practically in the open air. My hostess speaks nothing but Spanish, so we converse by pleasant smiles."

The year 1876 found him once more in America for the greater part of October and November. Life

passed much as on his former visits, in the company of Sam Ward and Hurlbert. He also saw much of the Duncans, and something of Evarts. The names of the hospitable James Gordon Bennett and John Hay, and of Laurence Oliphant, recur in his notes, and on one occasion he writes : "Hurlbert and I gave breakfast to Tupper and Barnum. It was inimitable." Mr. Barnum was equally pleased. He wrote : "What a glorious treat Tupper did afford us to-day. I regard him as a benefactor. I am sorry to say that our horse-rehearsals are only from 8 to 10 a.m. If these unearthly hours can be utilised the enclosed order will do the business." The order was one to admit at all times to rehearsals of horse-riding, to show him all objects of interest, and to keep reserved seats for him when desired. But Mr. Barnum's interests extended to a world beyond that of his famous circus. He again wrote recommending Rosebery to hear an eloquent Presbyterian preacher : "Enclosed note to sexton would get you (*incognito*) a good seat or two. I am not a *proselyter*, but if on your voyage you should have a couple of leisure hours I could supply you a few pages that might open new and lofty ideas, if your Lordship has not looked into new and universal theology." Rosebery announced his intention of hearing the Presbyterian preacher. He also played racquets pretty frequently throughout this visit.

Lord Dufferin was disappointed at there being no visit to Canada this time, but wrote : "However, I daresay we shall be able to have a political crisis for you by this time next year, if you will promise to come."

A review of these American visits during Rosebery's unmarried years leads to the conclusion that to himself they represented the holiday spirit in its fullest form. In America he was absolutely free to go where he wished, and to do what he liked. His extreme quickness of apprehension permitted him to make the most of experiences not in themselves extraordinary. Soon after he returned to England he dined with

Ferdinand de Rothschild, to meet Lord Beaconsfield and a cheerful party. The Prime Minister told Lady Bradford : “ After dinner there was whist, and Rosebery came up to me, and talked very well—just come from America—his third visit, and full as an egg of fun and quaint observation.”¹

¹ Lord Beaconsfield to Lady Bradford, December 8th, 1876. *Life of Lord Beaconsfield*, vol. vi, ch. iii.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES, 1871-1879

It happened, perhaps unfortunately for Rosebery himself, that the current of events did not automatically carry him along the ordinary routine of party politics. He was too young to take an active part in the Liberal triumph of 1868, and he was not urged by tradition to an early plunge into public life, like a Hartington or a Lansdowne. He had thus missed the brilliant dawn of Mr. Gladstone's greatest administration. His convictions, cautiously formed, were now definitely of a Liberal colour ; but even had he been a political conscript from the day when he came of age, nothing could ever have turned him into an unquestioning partisan. In 1871 he had followed up his successful opening as Seconder of the Address by as many interventions in debate as could be expected or desired from a novice ; during the session that followed, he was a recognised member of Lord Granville's flock, though never a blindfold follower in its track.

In February 1872 Gladstone asked him to call, said that Granville wanted assistance in the House of Lords, that an attempt was being made to combine political office with the Household appointments ; would he consider taking the vacant Lordship-in-waiting on the same footing as Morley and Camperdown, representing in the House the department formerly the Poor Law Board, now the Board of Rating ? In his note of the interview he writes : "I said I would consider the proposal, but I confess in my own mind it never occurred to me to require consideration : what I said was only out of respect to Mr. Gladstone. At the same time, if I wanted political office just now it is quite clear that it is the

only thing that I could be offered, and much higher than my deserts. On Friday morning I sent a respectful note to Mr. Gladstone declining the offer."

2 BERKELEY SQUARE, *February 16th, 1872.*

" DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

" I am sure you will believe me when I say how fully sensible I am of your personal kindness to me yesterday, both in manner and in making me the proposal that you did ; and also of the honour I should receive in entering public life under your government.

" I need not therefore fear misconception when I say that in addition to my incompetency to perform satisfactorily either class of the duties which would devolve upon me, there are private reasons which compel me with all gratitude and respect to decline your offer.

" Yours faithfully,

" A. ROSEBERY.

" The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone."

In the light of later knowledge the offer looks inadequate if not grudging. But Gladstone held that the rungs of the official ladder must be climbed one by one ; he did not like passing over older men who had given good service even of a modest sort, and a good many such had survived from his administration of 1868. So that a man of four-and-twenty perhaps could not have expected more, and Rosebery's private note proves that he himself did not.

A year later Mr. Gladstone offered him the Lord-Lieutenancy of Linlithgow, which he declined in the following terms :

Private.

2 BERKELEY SQUARE, *May 2nd, 1873.*

" DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

" I need hardly say how honoured I am by your kind proposal.

" The office of Lord Lieutenant has, I believe, in Scotland at least, hardly any public duties. This ought to make the undertaking of it very easy : but I confess it weighs with me on the other side. And yet, though a nominal responsibility, it acts as a tie in various ways.

“ Besides it involves other obligations of society and residence by which at present I should be very unwilling to bind myself.

“ And moreover it seems to me that a Lord Lieutenant should be a person constantly resident in the County and conversant with its affairs. I cannot pretend to this. The office is a high honour, greatly appreciated in the district, and one which there are many joyfully and efficiently to undertake.

“ These reasons alone are sufficient to entitle me to ask you to excuse me from accepting the lieutenancy of Linlithgowshire. I do hope I have expressed clearly what I mean, though I am not sure of this. I thank you warmly for the proposal, for I hope I may take it as another proof of your kindly feeling; and I trust you will not consider that, in declining it, I have done anything in the slightest degree inconsistent with that sincere gratitude and respect which makes me always

“ Very sincerely yours,
“ ROSEBERY.”

Mr. Gladstone would not accept this refusal, and sent the letter to Lord Granville, writing on a slip:

“ This is wrong.
Can you or Bessborough persuade him?
His mother could not ?

“ W. E. G. May 2.”

Lord Granville noted: “ We will try. G.”

Mr. Gladstone’s *entourage* hammered away at Rosebery’s disinclination, as did some of his political friends. The sternest remonstrance came from Bouverie Primrose, who covered eight sides of note-paper, and pointed out that to reject such an opportunity was to some extent an offence to his country neighbours, all the more as his grandfather had regarded it as an honour to hold the post. It was also a slight to the Government whom he had publicly supported, because they would be at their wits’ end to find an eligible candidate in the county. His uncle concluded by saying:

“ Lastly there is incomprehensibility.

“ I think everyone does himself injustice when he makes himself incomprehensible. There are no duties or obligations upon a Lord Lieutenant which you could not fulfil and which could have been heavy or restrictive to you, and no one can understand or assign the least reason why you should seclude yourself, in a country of Honours and Titles, from an Honour which fell so naturally and harmoniously upon you, and imposed no toil or restraint to speak of.

“ Such incomprehensibility is not to the advantage of a man’s public or private character, and is liable to give rise to a number of false surmises which may not only influence the public and private estimation in which he is held, but be made to recoil upon himself in ways he least expects, at moments not the least looked for and in modes most disagreeable and permanently annoying.”

This severe and almost prophetic remonstrance from a most affectionate relation, added to further pressure from Mr. Gladstone, had the desired effect, and he wrote again to Mr. Gladstone as follows :

Private.

2 BERKELEY SQUARE, *May 25th, 1873.*

“ DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ I am truly sensible of your kindness in sending for me and speaking to me the other day. At the same time I cannot feel convinced by what was said as regards the Queen. Such an argument seems to me, to go too far ; and I should be very sorry to follow it out to its legitimate consequences.

“ I can hardly tell you how sorry I am that I cannot bring my mind into agreement with the arguments which have been used against my refusal of this unhappy office : nor how sorry I am that my views should not be in exact accordance with yours even on a point like this. For it shews clearly to me want of judgment or discernment on my part : and yet I can but follow my little light. I honestly confess I see no call of duty in the question : but I do see a probability of a very false position for me in future years.

“ At the same time though I cannot bring my mind into accordance with the views you expressed, I can bring my

will into subjection. This I am quite ready to do. I am sure, where we differ, it is a thousand chances to one that you are right. So, if you still wish or think it proper to appoint me, I will defer to you.

“ I hope this note is not presumptuous or pompous. It is perhaps harder to write and to do than you would think; for I have thought a good deal about this, and consequently feel rather strongly.

“ But, however you may think proper to end the transaction, it will always leave with me the pleasant memory of your kindness and condescension.

“ Believe me,

“ Yours faithfully,

“ ROSEBERY.”

The session of 1872 was chiefly notable in the House of Lords for an animated debate on the Geneva Arbitration on the American Claims against Britain for damage inflicted during the Civil War, especially by the raiding *Alabama*, improperly allowed to escape from an English port. The arbitration had been agreed in the previous year by the Treaty of Washington, the British side being represented by a Commission, of which Lord Ripon was the chief. The present point at issue was the inclusion or exclusion of what were known as the Indirect Claims, many of them of the most preposterous character, such as the claims for an indemnity for causing increased premiums for marine insurance, for loss by transfer of the mercantile marine to the British flag, and, strangest of all, for causing the prolongation of the war, though it was notorious that the fighting on land had continued for months irrespective of the exertions of two or three privateers. Lord Russell, with all the prestige of an ex-Prime Minister and ex-Foreign Secretary, demanded that the Arbitration should not take place until the Indirect Claims had been formally withdrawn, and he was backed by another *magni nominis umbra*, Lord Grey.¹ Other great guns came

¹ 3rd Earl Grey (1802-1894). Secretary of State for the Colonies 1846-52.

into supporting position,—Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,¹ Lord Malmesbury,² Lord Derby³ in moderate terms, Lord Salisbury in terms of extreme bitterness against both the Government and the United States. Lord Granville and his colleagues, Kimberley and Ripon, made the best of their case. They were followed by Lord Westbury, who, speaking from their benches, but not concealing his polished contempt for them and their ways, held that it would be highly mischievous to carry Lord Russell's motion.

Rosebery followed, a Daniel come to judgment among orators thirty or forty years older than himself. He began by a reference to "those precious balms with which Lord Westbury was accustomed to break the head of Her Majesty's Government." And I remember his confessing in after years with what terror he uttered this description of the most quietly formidable figure in the House of Lords. His main point, and a strong one, was that the appearance of dictation from England would drive all Americans, even those who most disapproved the Indirect Claims, to a refusal to withdraw them. It was the kind of feeling which, in this country, had caused the rejection of the Conspiracy to Murder Bill in 1858, not so much because it was objected to as because a foreign Power was supposed to have suggested it. He hit out boldly—he "did not admire the position of the noble Earl who had brought forward this resolution with regard to this question. Considering that the acts of the *Alabama* and other vessels out of which these claims arose took place while the noble Earl was Foreign Secretary, this motion would have come with a better grace from anyone rather than him. No one knew better than himself the difference in their relative positions. He well knew the humble position

¹ Stratford Canning, 1st Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe (1786–1880).

² 3rd Earl of Malmesbury (1807–1889). Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1852 and 1858–9.

³ 15th Earl of Derby (1826–1893). Secretary of State for Colonies 1858; for India 1858–9; for Foreign Affairs 1866–8; and again 1874–8; and for Colonies again 1882–5.

he occupied in their Lordships' House. He well knew that the noble Earl addressed them with all the weight of his great experience, all the lustre of his historic name, with all the prestige of a former Prime Minister. But, knowing all this, he could honestly say, on this occasion and as regards this debate, that he preferred his own insignificance to the eminence, the mischievous eminence, of the noble Earl. It was easy enough to pass votes of censure. During the few years he had sat in that House the annual Vote of Censure had come round as regularly as the hands of a clock. But it was not every day they had an opportunity of destroying a treaty. . . . They, by their votes, would have done that of which it was easy, though painful, to see a beginning, but almost impossible to see the end. They would have stamped out the last vestige of a treaty ; they would have blistered instead of healing an open sore ; they would have disturbed, perhaps permanently, the good relations between the two countries. He implored, then, each noble Lord, as he recorded his vote, to pause in face of the responsibility—the tremendous responsibility—which he was about to assume" (June 4th, 1872).

Lord Cairns said that no apology was necessary for a junior Peer's intrusion into this debate, but quite the contrary, and was generally complimentary. A division was happily staved off, and the event altogether justified the Government's caution, for the United States, without formally withdrawing the Indirect Claims, soon announced that they would not be submitted at Geneva. If they did not appear there, they clearly could not crop up elsewhere ; but the faces of the President and the Senate were saved with no harm done to anybody.

In the course of the same session, Rosebery had insistently advocated the extension of extradition treaties, and on the Scottish Education Bill, as has already been described, he unsuccessfully brought up a clause similar in form to the "Cowper-Temple"

section of the English Act, though he designed it for a different application in the Scottish schools. But he could not yet be counted as a regular attendant in Parliament. Lord Granville rejoiced when he "took any opportunity of adding to the too few proofs he had already given of his power to take a most important part in the House"; and the *Scotsman* echoed the sentiment, urging him, if he spoke from below the gangway, not to turn his back on the reporters' gallery. The Duke of Argyll's enunciation was the model for him to follow, Lord Granville's conversational tone the example to avoid. But it was not only the official mind that was exercised about his future. Prominent Members of Parliament who were also sportsmen and men of the world dropped words of admonition. Horsman, of Cave of Adullam fame, whose oratory Rosebery had praised to Disraeli years before,¹ asked him down to the country for a talk (January 30th, 1873).

"It is a very interesting and critical period for you, and I should like very much to try to show you how much there is both to inspire and repay you in the future, if you really brace yourself to a life worthy of your opportunities and gifts. But time is very precious, and great prizes are not won without consciousness of the necessity for great efforts. Excuse this *lecture*, but I am much interested."

And a little later Sir Robert Peel,² himself the most careless of brilliant politicians, wrote with an undertone of warning (March 12th, 1873): "I hear you are doing capitally as Chairman of your Committee, and hope you give yourself all the trouble necessary to carry it through to a successful issue . . . everything will depend upon a well-digested Report, which you are fully capable of drafting."

Even "Uncle Sam's" indulgent sympathies became

¹ See p. 30.

² The Rt. Hon. Sir Robert Peel (1822-1895). M.P. 1850-80 and 1884-6; Chief Secretary for Ireland 1861-5.

uneasy as time went on. Rosebery replied to a letter of his (May 23rd, 1874) :

“ Many thanks for your pleasant notes and stories. The one which amused me most I confess was the one in which you expressed your fear of my falling into the hands of Padwick and ruining myself on the Turf. Even a Scottish peer cannot be ruined by four racehorses, especially when they win ! ”

Mr. Padwick was the notorious gentleman who was believed to have played the part of Mephistopheles in the Hastings drama, and a name of terror to parents and guardians.

Rosebery could make a fair case for some political inactivity during these earlier years of this decade, but there were personal causes besides, the outcome of his introspective reserve. A man may be fully conscious of his own powers but be continually dissatisfied with their exercise on succeeding occasions. Perhaps it is only thus that in oratory, as in other arts, the highest peaks are to be climbed. I may be pardoned for quoting in this connection a reminiscent letter, written some forty years later.

Lord Rosebery to Lord Crewe.

38 BERKELEY SQUARE, December 29th, 1916.

“ MY DEAR R.,

“ Lying awake last night I was thinking about our conversation about your father, and I remembered an episode which, as one of many, seems to explain the remarkable good-will with which he is treated in current memoirs.

“ As a very young fellow I made some speech in the House of Lords (I forget anything else about it), which seemed to me a dead failure, and I was greatly depressed. But next morning I received a note from your father congratulating me upon it in cordial terms. This warmed me once more, and raised me from the ground. It might have been the frigid dignity of the House of Lords which had made me unduly dejected. My conviction, however, still remains that the speech was a failure, and that your father, realising this, and the mortification of a young friend, took the trouble on re-

turning home to write a letter to cheer him from the pure tact of kindness.

“ That was the sort of thing that he did I fancy pretty often, and that is why his memory is so sweet to scores of others as well as

“ Your aff.
“ R.”

Outside the House there was no particular spur to oratorical effort : the Government's mandate was not exhausted, though enthusiasm might be waning ; the platform, especially for Peers, had, in ordinary times, not yet become the recognised medium for declarations of political faith. So it was not surprising to find Rosebery silent, except for occasional interventions in Scotland on matters of immediate interest in that country. Nor did he show any fresh activity in this direction up to the Conservative victory in 1874, or for some time after it. In the House of Lords in 1873, after once helping to defeat the Government on an amendment moved on a Scottish legal question, after speaking powerfully in favour of an inquiry into the system of patronage in the Church of Scotland, and on the question of judicial peerages, regretting that no special regard was being paid to the Scottish Bench, he asked one or two questions on foreign affairs.

He then settled down to one great effort, in moving for the appointment of a Royal Commission on the supply of horses (February 20th, 1873). At the beginning of a sparkling speech which fills thirteen columns of Hansard, he dealt with a published letter addressed to himself by Admiral Rous, “ whose opinion would carry just weight with them, not only on account of his great ability, and because he had added lustre to the Navy and the Turf, but also because he gave up to the horse ‘ what was meant for mankind.’ ” The Admiral had written that horses were better and more numerous than ever before, and that the general prosperity had not only sent up their price but that of all other stock. So that a grassland farmer might hesitate to breed horses if he

could get a quicker return from cattle and sheep. On the other hand, in Rosebery's opinion, backed by a series of figures, there was a serious shortage both of harness horses and cart horses, and the export of animals of all breeds was becoming a formidable menace, especially from the military standpoint. It may be remarked that during the last fifty years similar complaints have even survived the gradual replacement of horses by mechanical power, but Rosebery was entitled to regard himself as something of an authority on light horses, since he was asked more than once to judge the classes of hunters and harness at agricultural shows. In this debate he made, incidentally, a brave defence of racing, which, as he said, Mr. Gladstone had lately described as "a noble, manly, distinguished, and historical amusement," and which hundreds of thousands of the poorer classes of the community enjoyed.

Lord Granville, for the Government, while considering Rosebery's fears exaggerated, offered a Select Committee in place of a Royal Commission, also speaking up for the thoroughbred horse, and mentioning that he had stayed in France with "the only foreigner who has ever won the Derby,¹ whose farm of 2,000 acres, with all its road and market service, was worked entirely by thoroughbred horses from two and a half to five years old, on the system prevailing to some extent in Ireland." The Duke of Richmond, the Leader of the Opposition, agreed with Lord Granville, and the Select Committee was nominated. But *post equitem sedit atra cura*, and the Government soon had greater anxieties to face. Mr. Disraeli's ministry had touched on the thorny question of Irish University Education, but could not grapple with it; Mr. Gladstone, having dealt with the Irish Church, would not leave this more intricate problem unsolved. He won the adhesion of Cardinal Manning; but this was of less moment than the hostility of Cardinal Cullen and the Irish Bishops, who were

¹ Count F. de Lagrange won the Derby with *Gladiateur* in 1865.

alienated by a measure which the Presbyterian community in the North found equally unpalatable. Thus the second reading of the Bill was defeated by a majority of three. Disraeli would not form an administration unless a dissolution were to follow ; so Gladstone's Government held on through the year, inevitably shaken and weakened.

At the end of January 1874 came the Dissolution of Parliament, and Disraeli sailed in with a triumphant majority. This might be the customary swing of parties ; but the portent was the return of fifty-eight Irish Home Rulers, pledged, as a distinct party, to a revolutionary change in their country's government. At this first stage its significance was not properly understood by anybody in England. At any rate, it can never have crossed Rosebery's mind, as he scanned the election returns, that his own career was destined to be more painfully hampered by the Irish question than by any other. During the election he was, of course, altogether muzzled, like other Peers, and could only vent his feelings in private. In a letter to Sam Ward he protested (February 16th, 1874) :

“ What nonsense you write about the Tories—as to their being able to be more liberal from not having to make such professions. They are all professions. They profess anything but Liberalism, they would call themselves Communists to get seats, but when they have got them they are as illiberal as ever. . . . The Tories are mad with joy. They condole with one, they sympathise with one, they pat one on the back. I nearly died of it, till I found a certain remedy, which is this : I always say, ‘ Well, now it is a consolation to think *one* of my friends will benefit by it ; what *do* you mean to take ? What *will* you accept ? ’ His face drops, his manner becomes mysterious, the words ‘ Commissioner ’—‘ Secretary ’—are vaguely audible. I reply, ‘ Too low, you don’t know your own position : no fellow occupies such a space in the eyes of the country—of your age.’ He beams upon me, but says, ‘ There is something in that, but you exaggerate.’ ‘ Not a bit,’ I rejoin firmly. ‘ You have a great future. If I were a Tory, I should look to you as my leader.’ We part delighted with each other, he not having

the most remote chance of ever rising to the position of—say—a parish beadle. But this is a great recipe, and I only tell it to people the other side of the Atlantic.”

The untoward issue of the conflict had certainly not dashed Rosebery’s spirits. He concludes his letter :

“ *Dilectissime mi Samuel
vale et jubila*

“ *Sic non plus ab
So no more from*

“ *umbrâ tuâ
Rosa-bacca.”*

When Rosebery found himself for the first time on the Opposition benches to the left of the Throne he had no immediate temptation to settle down to parliamentary hackwork. The measure most keenly debated was the Public Worship Regulation Bill, which, from its nature, inspired in celestial minds the fury usual when religious matters are mooted in a deliberative assembly. In these battles Rosebery took no part ; but he was keenly concerned with the Scottish Church Patronage Bill, on its first reading congratulating the new Government on tackling a grievance which his friends of the late administration had not attempted to handle. Doubtless the Queensferry case was vividly in his mind.¹ He reserved further observations for the Second Reading, and did not, in fact, speak at this stage, though he once intervened briefly when the Bill was in Committee. The measure which transferred patronage from private individuals to parishioners was approved by the great majority of Scottish Peers, including Lord Rosslyn, who had lately been nominated by Disraeli to the post of Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. People remarked with pleasure that he had received this appointment instead of the Mastership of the Buckhounds, because it was feared that his command of explosive language

¹ See p. 58.

might shock the followers of the Queen's hunt. The Bill passed easily through all its stages, but it had a rougher passage through the House of Commons.

Rosebery's only other appearance in the summer of 1874 was characteristic. He always had a keen eye for personal grievances, and would take any pains to put right a personal injustice. A former official of the House had got into trouble over his accounts as Clerk of the Patent Office. The department of the Comptroller and Auditor-General did not yet exist, and the case was dealt with by arbitrators, with the result that the official lost his pension and passed eight months in prison. He had now presented a petition for rehearing, and Rosebery, speaking forcibly, moved that this be referred to the appropriate committee. He was supported by the great authority of Lord Redesdale, the Chairman of Committees, and by Lord Bath. But the Lord Chancellor and his two predecessors demurred from the purely official standpoint, so that the attempt failed.

Nothing gave Rosebery greater pleasure than humorous exposure of meaningless anomalies based on tradition, if they proved to be really inconvenient, so that when his great friend the Duke of St. Albans pointed out the absurdity whereby theatres in the Lord Chancellor's jurisdiction (March 5th, 1875) were closed on Ash Wednesday, while other places of amusement were open, he chimed in with a merciless sketch of the regulations under which the Court Theatre remained open because it was in Chelsea, not in the Metropolis, and "an exotic body of minstrels known as Negro Melodists could, by a change in the locality of their performance, make that which was illegal in Piccadilly have the odour of sanctity when it was brought within the precincts of Drury Lane." Later in the session he prays for a general measure to deal with the whole subject of licensing of theatres and places of public amusement. His other appearances in the House in this year were concerned with minor points of Scottish Bills, his particular parlia-

mentary business being a Committee of Enquiry into Scottish Representative Peerages, of which he was Chairman.

It is difficult to-day to comprehend the excitement and hostility that were aroused by the Royal Titles Bill, authorising the Sovereign to assume the style of Empress of India. On the one hand it was felt that this title, whatever its past associations, fairly represented the relation of the British Crown to the Princes and people of India ; it had not been thought wise to make any change immediately after the suppression of the Mutiny ; but the Prince of Wales had just made a successful progress through the Peninsula, and the moment, therefore, seemed appropriate. In opposition, it was argued that the Imperial title brought with it traditions of tyranny and of arrogant domination—“*Tu regere imperio populos Romane memento*”¹ ; Queen Victoria was nowise the successor of the Mogul Emperors of Delhi ; no position in the world was superior to that of the King or Queen of England, and it should not be implied that there could be ; sycophantic people would try to use the title regularly in this country.

The proposal might have had a better reception had it been made by some other statesman ; Disraeli was believed to be subservient to Queen Victoria's likes and dislikes, and any woman's fancy, it was thought in those benighted days, would be captivated by the tinsel crown offered to her by his Oriental imagination. So that the attack did not come from the Radical benches. Nor did it follow party lines. In the House of Commons it was led by Lord Hartington ; and in the Lords Lord Shaftesbury, who had no party ties, moved an Address begging the Queen not to assume the title of Empress. At an earlier stage, the veteran Duke of Somerset, also no party man, for he disliked Gladstone and despised Disraeli, said that the Prime Minister had become intoxicated by the atmosphere of the Court ;

¹ *Aeneid*, vi. 851.

Lord Lawrence, one of the saviours of India, thought that a new title in the vernacular should be selected by the Governor-General in Council ; Lord Sandhurst, a soldier of long Indian experience, supported Lord Shaftesbury, so that Rosebery found himself in good independent company. He pointed out that, all over the country, meetings were being held and petitions signed against the Government proposal. The title of King might be applied to a ruler of rulers quite as well as that of Emperor. He regretted the absence of Lord Derby, because his forbears had been Kings of Man, and yet had owed allegiance to the Kings of England. Scottish sovereigns had done homage to Kings of England, and King Edward the First would rise from his grave if he could hear some of the arguments that had been used about the title of King as compared with that of Emperor. On the other hand, the Emperor of Brazil had no rulers among his subjects, nor had the Emperor of Hayti. The opposition, he maintained, was in no sense factious, but reflected public opinion, which had obliged the Government to taboo the use of the title in this country. "So that the Bill might properly be labelled 'Poisonous, for outward application only.' "

In the division, Lord Shaftesbury was beaten by only forty-six in a house of 228 peers, a figure which shows how strongly the innate conservatism of all parties reacted, as it continues to do, even in these advanced days, against any suggestion appearing to be merely new-fangled. The event has, on the whole, justified Lord Beaconsfield and his majority. The title of King-Emperor is acceptable in India, not least to the Indian Princes ; and the title of King of England has suffered no displacement or diminution whatever, but stands first in security and in estimation among the monarchies of the world.

During this autumn a ferment of greater oratorical activity arose outside Parliament. Mr. Gladstone, no longer leading his party in the House of Commons, had begun to excite the country by his denunciations

of the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria, and both sides had to follow suit (October 4th, 1876). Rosebery made a rattling party speech at a banquet given at Dumfries to Mr. Robert Jardine of Castlemilk,¹ hitting right and left at Conservative policy at home and abroad. In some loudly cheered sentences he said: "To come to the difference between Liberals and Conservatives, it has struck me that it can be defined by a simple mechanical illustration, as the difference between a locomotive and a donkey engine. The locomotive, as we all know, is a swift machine, and a certain sign of progress and of civilisation. The donkey engine is constructed to fulfil its usefulness in a much narrower sphere and to remain stationary the while."

Metaphors sometimes come home to roost, as he realised a few days later on board the *Russia*, where he occupied a large deck cabin in the bows of the ship. "At Dumfries on Wednesday I compared the Tory party to a donkey engine. They are now avenged, as the engine is outside my door and makes an infernal noise."

Rosebery had travelled more and knew more foreigners than most men of his age, so that his interest in foreign affairs was soon reflected in Parliament. He pressed for information about Heligoland (March 13th, 1876), of which, he observed, most people only knew that it had been in moral peril from gambling tables and physical danger from rabbits. He wanted to know how this little dependency was governed, because its minute size did not justify high-handed interference with its constitution. Lord Carnarvon gave a soothing reply, pointing out that some of the islanders had adopted the profession of wreckers; but that all the liberties of the people would be maintained. Egypt, where Mr. Cave's financial mission had lately been sent, also occupied his attention, and he made a request for papers.

¹ Sir Robert Jardine (1825-1905), first Baronet. M.P. for Dumfries Burghs 1868-74; for Co. Dumfries 1880-92; head of the great firm of Jardine, Matheson & Company.

It was not until the beginning of the new session in February 1877 that the Eastern Question in its fresh aspect became a subject of serious parliamentary discussion. The tale of atrocious cruelties inflicted on the Christian inhabitants of Bulgaria by the agents of the Turkish Government, with its approval and connivance, from May of the previous year onwards, had filtered slowly to England; and the Government were accused of having carried their indulgence to Turkey, based on their obligations under the Treaty of 1856, to such a pitch as to fall short of the other great Powers in the effort to check these crimes and to insist on the punishment of the criminals. In the autumn, Mr. Gladstone, emerging from his partial retirement, had headed the agitation of protest. The incomparable fire of his speeches, and their effect on the country, began to make shrewd observers wonder what this retirement really meant.

There were animated debates in both Houses early in 1877, first on the Address in reply to the Queen's Speech, and then on special motions. On February 20th the Duke of Argyll, the classical orator of his Liberal generation, asked for information concerning the special mission of Lord Salisbury to Constantinople in the previous November. This mission was understood to be the sign of a bolder policy imposed on the Government by the popular indignation which the Opposition campaign had aroused. The official reply came from the Prime Minister, just installed in the House as Earl of Beaconsfield. In the course of his speech he produced facts and dates to prove the complete ignorance which pervaded not only England but all Europe at the time when the atrocities were committed. Two days later Rosebery pointed out that the Blue Book did not seem to confirm the Prime Minister's argument, and he was not entirely convinced by the explanation offered in Lord Beaconsfield's reply. Later (April 19th) he called attention to the unhappy position in which this country was left by the Tripartite Treaty of 1856, by which

the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire was guaranteed : " We might be some day placed in this position, that we should either have to fight for Turkey, a war which the conscience of this country would refuse, or to draw back from our pledged word." Lord Derby, in reply, advanced the rather risky doctrine when thus baldly stated : " No Treaties can be, or are intended to be eternal . . . nothing has been more common in European diplomacy than the recognition of the fact that Treaties do, by the lapse of time and the force of events, become obsolete."

A month later Rosebery developed his thesis still further (May 14th). Russia was now at war with Turkey ; Austria might become embroiled in the contest. What was to prevent her from summoning us to fulfil our engagement of 1856, and to insist on our maintaining the integrity of Turkey ? The Russian army was marching into the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. How could it be maintained that the integrity and independence of that Empire had not been interfered with ? Lord Derby had said, the other day, that treaties were not eternal. Supposing that to be true, let them be decently buried, and consigned to the sepulchre of archives ; but let them not sneak out of existence under the impression that nobody was going to act upon them. Lord Derby could only rejoin that there was in fact little risk of our being called on to fight under the terms of the Tripartite Treaty, and that it was an awkward moment at which to denounce that instrument. Perhaps the main interest of this debate to-day rests on the comparison with what happened thirty years later, when Rosebery was to urge on his fellow-countrymen the danger of our being drawn into a European war from engagements contracted with France. No statesman of his generation liked as little as he did to contemplate the necessity of a future war.

Much had happened before Rosebery again intervened in a debate on Foreign Policy in the House of

Lords. Russia, after some unexpected checks to her advance, had arrived within reach of Constantinople ; she had forced on Turkey the Treaty of San Stefano, which the other Great Powers, under the guidance of Lord Beaconsfield, had refused to sanction. The Berlin Congress had been held, and had carried out a qualified partition of the European dominions of the Sultan. Rosebery took no part in the great debate which followed Lord Beaconsfield's long and masterly speech when laying on the table the protocols of the Congress. That was the occasion on which Lord Derby, stung by what he considered the misleading account given by Lord Beaconsfield of his reasons for resigning the Foreign Secretaryship,¹ opened out the detailed story of those reasons, and of the different views taken in the Cabinet at the time. His successor at the Foreign Office, Lord Salisbury, lost his temper at what he considered a shocking breach of confidence, and went so far as to compare his noble relative to the basest figure in all English history, Titus Oates.

Rosebery's opportunity came three months later. At the end of May and the beginning of June the Government had entered into secret negotiations with the two protagonists, with Russia through the Salisbury-Schouvaloff Memorandum, of which a leading feature was the yielding to her of Kars and Batoum (May 30th to June 4th, 1878); and with Turkey by a Convention whereby, in return for our occupation of Cyprus, we agreed to come to the assistance of Turkey in the event of her Asiatic dominions being attacked by Russia from the more advantageous position now secured to the latter. It was the Russian arrangement that caused Rosebery's intervention. Early in June the terms of the Memorandum had startled the world by their appearance in the pink columns of the *Globe*. By an amazing piece of departmental stupidity, this crucial document had been entrusted to a temporary clerk, engaged, so it was said, at 10d. per hour, and the paper being worth

¹ *Hansard*, March 28th, 1878.

a great deal more than its weight in gold, the unhappy man was tempted to reveal it to an enterprising newspaper. Lord Salisbury, when questioned in the House, replied that "the statement in the *Globe*, and other statements he had seen, were wholly un-authentic, and not deserving the confidence of Their Lordships' House." The summary first given in the *Globe* omitted to state that Turkey would be able to leave troops in the new province south of the Balkans. This was a point of substance, but it was thought to be a strain of language to describe as "wholly un-authentic" a version which chanced to pass it over, the remaining points being correctly enumerated.

Ten days later the *Globe* had printed the entire Memorandum: Rosebery now asked for it as a Parliamentary Paper in the most considerable speech he had yet delivered. The Government had advanced the excuse that the Memorandum could not be published without other papers which foreign Governments would not allow them to produce. He thought this alarming, because the country might be pledged to something in the future of which the British Parliament was to be left in total, entire, and contemptuous ignorance. He next dealt faithfully with the comedy which, as he put it, had been played in sending a dispatch to Lord Odo Russell, our Ambassador at Berlin, instructing him to press upon Russia, and on the other Powers, the injustice of depriving Turkey of Kars and Batoum. If the English Plenipotentiary failed to persuade the Powers in this respect, he would be made acquainted with the course which Her Majesty's Government had decided to pursue. Rosebery asked whether Lord Odo, when he received that communication, was cognisant of the Agreement which had been signed on May 30th. "Was Lord Odo one of the company or was he a simple actor put up to recite the arguments of Batoum, with the prompter by to keep him to his part?" The whole thing, he proceeded, reminded him of the

scene in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* between Starveling, one of the actors in the play within the play, and Bottom the weaver.

After dwelling bitterly on the abandonment of Greece by England, he passed on to a more general review of the situation: "He did not pretend that secret understandings were unknown to us; but he believed this was the first time we had called a European Congress with the view to discussing great Treaties, and standing forth on behalf of public law, we having, at the same time, bound ourselves in private to consent to those stipulations which we had denounced, and which we continued to denounce. . . . This country had always had one or two attributes that distinguished her from many other nations. One of these was unto her a sacred prerogative,—that of standing out on behalf of weak nations; another was that in dealing with the affairs of other nations we were fair and straightforward. Another circumstance marking our history was the openness—the almost faulty openness—of our diplomacy. Another of which we had always been proud heretofore, was the completeness of our parliamentary control. He confessed to the fear that great doubt would now be thrown upon our possession of these attributes, and indeed he regretted that some of them seemed entirely to have disappeared."

In Lord Salisbury's reply, which followed immediately, he defended his use of the epithet "un-authentic," and in the same circumstances would use it again. Rosebery's complaint that the traditions of English diplomacy were not being maintained "only shows that entire unacquaintance with the inside of a Government Office which, I have no doubt in the noble Earl's case, will not last long." It was dangerous to come into a Congress where opinions were hopelessly divergent, and this made preliminary understandings necessary. It was unfair to say that Lord Odo Russell was playing in a comedy, because, as a matter of fact, Russia did notify at Berlin the

terms of her occupation of Batoum by making it a commercial port, not a naval station. In the matter of Greece, Lord Salisbury could only offer her the consolation of bidding her trust to the development of her own resources in comparison with those of her stronger neighbour, Turkey. Other critics of the Government followed, Lord Carnarvon answering his former colleague; Lord Morley, one of the rising Liberals; Lord Bath, another of the Tories who had broken with Lord Beaconsfield over the Eastern Question; Lord Hammond, lately the skilled permanent head of the Foreign Office; and Lord Granville, who wound up the debate. All these gave unstinted praise to Rosebery's speech. No other member of the Government took part in the discussion.

During the remaining life of Lord Beaconsfield's administration, Rosebery abstained from further criticism of its Foreign Policy in Parliament, but he carried on the platform war by several speeches in Scotland. Of these, the principal was delivered at a Liberal demonstration at Aberdeen (October 10th, 1878). After indignantly repudiating the accusation that the Liberals were a caucus-run party, he proceeded to dissect a pledge made by Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary, the night before. "No meeting could ever have been more mutually agreeable than the meeting of Mr. Cross and his constituents. The constituents saw that in Mr. Cross they had an able, an upright, and an honourable gentleman as their representative; and Mr. Cross must have been convinced that if they accepted the statement he made to them, the confidence of his constituents must be illimitable and inexhaustible."

After banter of Mr. Cross for a series of unproved assertions, he observed that the Home Secretary

"proceeded in the spirit of a prophet to tell them that the Liberal party, or as he called them, the Radical party, would stop at nothing but a clean sweep of all existing institutions. As regards the word Radical, I do not quarrel with being called a Radical, if it means one who looks at the

root of things, and is not satisfied with assertion without proof, and with the mere claptrap of invective. When Cabinet Ministers go about and utter statements of that sort about their opponents, it is time for the country to tell that Cabinet what it thinks of it."

Having disposed of Mr. Cross, he turned to the Foreign Policy of the Government.

"Now, I should like to discuss for a few moments what 'peace with honour' really is. I believe there have been few chances of a great European settlement comparable to that afforded by the Congress at Berlin. I believe that the Congress at Vienna and the Congress at Paris afforded no such opportunities. I think there never was a more favourable opportunity for really carrying out a very noble Foreign Policy. Well, the result of it has been that the Congress of Berlin appears to have offered no settlement at all. What have the Government done? They have partitioned Turkey, they have secured a doubtful fragment of the spoil for themselves. They have abandoned Greece, they have incurred responsibilities of a vast and unknown kind, which no British Government has a right to incur without consulting the British Parliament and the British people."

With a touch of platform exaggeration, he went on to describe as "one of the unhealthiest spots on the face of the globe," Cyprus, which, before the other Powers had secured the portions of the Turkish Empire which they desired, another Power engaged, behind the back of the plenipotentiaries, in securing for itself.

"That Power, Gentlemen, I blush to say, was Great Britain. We rendered ourselves by that act *participes criminis*—sharers of the spoil and of the plunder of our ancient ally. Sir, I venture to say that no defeat in battle could have been so prejudicial to our prestige on the Continent as the acquisition of the island of Cyprus in the way we got it. I ask you to think how, after the transactions of the last few months, we can keep up moral reputation on the Continent. We have flaunted the Treaty of 1856 in the face of other Powers as our banner and our motto, and when it came to affect ourselves we treated it as so much waste paper."

From the standpoint of this country's interests, he proceeded to urge, nothing could be graver than our engagement to defend Turkey in Asia in consideration of reforms which would never be executed. "You will have observed, all through these negotiations, that we actually treat Turkey as a great Power. There never was so deliberate a mistake as that. Turkey is not a great Power, she is an impotence." He concluded a loudly applauded speech by scouting the plea that this responsibility must be incurred for the preservation of India. "I believe it is no more necessary for the preservation of India than it is necessary that we should damage Spain in order to keep Gibraltar. But I do say this, that we may pay too great a price even for the preservation of India."

A little later, Lord Carnarvon addressed the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution on "Imperial Administration." It was a non-political occasion, but, in moving a vote of thanks, Rosebery made the first recorded utterance of his Imperial faith. He could not be sorry to do so in the presence of an ex-Colonial Secretary who had just severed his connection with the Government.

CHAPTER V

SCOTLAND, 1878-1882: LORD RECTORSHIPS: MARRIAGE

IN the autumn of 1878 the Liberal students of Aberdeen University, politically the most progressive of Scottish universities, had invited Rosebery to stand for the Lord Rectorship. It was an unusual compliment to a man of his age, but a complication arose from the possible candidature of Lord Aberdeen,¹ another young Scottish Peer of promise, with obvious local claims. His political affinities were at the time uncertain, and he wished to stand on a non-party platform. Mr. Gladstone knew that he was a Liberal at heart, and rejoiced at seeing the grandson of his old chief entering on public life. A rather animated correspondence followed. Rosebery was not prepared to disappoint his student supporters by withdrawing for no very urgent reason. In the event Aberdeen had no desire to appear as a rival Liberal; the students stuck to their party nomination, and Rosebery found himself only in competition with Mr. Richard Cross, then a rising, or half-risen, Tory politician. A desperate struggle ended in Rosebery's victory by a majority of three. In due course Lord Aberdeen became an earnest Liberal, and a valued public servant. His and Lady Aberdeen's friendship with Gladstone and with Rosebery lasted through the lives of both.

The Lord Rector of a Scottish university, after his official birth, does not develop immediate activity like the young of some mammals and fishes, and it was not till November 5th, 1880, that Rosebery delivered his Inaugural Address to the Aberdeen

¹7th Earl of Aberdeen, b. 1847. Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland 1886, and 1905-15; Governor-General of Canada 1893-8; cr. Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair, 1915.

students, at the Music Hall. His reception at the railway station the night before had been wildly enthusiastic, his carriage being dragged by the students to his hotel, where he had to address the crowd from a window. When the time came for the address, the respected Principal of the University, by a genial custom not necessarily implying hostile animus, was prevented from uttering a word by an orchestra of "miniature fog-horns, toy musical instruments, bells, and other contrivances." The Lord Rector was heard almost in silence, a thing which does not always happen to Lord Rectors. He began with the modesty of a young man addressing young men: "Chosen I believe as being, like you, a young Scotsman, though much older than yourselves, from sympathy rather than respect, from a sense of kinship rather than a hope of guidance." He went on to tell them of their coming share in the destinies of the Empire and in shaping the character of the nation, touched on the meaning and purpose of university training, and then reached his central subject, the crucial importance of the study of mediæval and modern history, and, for his audience, of Scottish history. He lamented the absence of any provision for its teaching, at Aberdeen as at the other universities,¹ and devoted the rest of his address to a brilliant sketch of the Scottish character as it developed through centuries of poverty and agonizing struggle up to its last two hundred years of prosperity and calm. It is a most penetrating analysis, of which a cavilling critic could only observe that the example of Macaulay had perhaps led the speaker to indulge in an excess of topical allusion and a plethora of proper names. But considering the audience and the occasion, such a reservation would scarcely be just. The concluding passages of the Address are marked by the deep gravity that Scotsmen understand and value.

¹ Sir William Fraser, the Scottish genealogist (1816-1898), founded by will a Chair of History and Palæography in the University of Edinburgh.

“ But I do not wish to weary, but to attract you, if possible, to the close study of Scottish history. I have thought that by so doing I could, without presumption or didactic affectation, best fulfil the duty imposed upon me. You are the best judges how far such a pursuit would suit your manifold dispositions. Around you learning spreads her various wares ; you have but to pick and choose. You are the generation that holds for the present the succession to the long roll of famous men who have adorned this University. They have handed to you the light ; it is for you to transmit it. The vestal lamp of knowledge may flicker, but it never dies ; even in the darkest hour of dormant civilisation, it found loving hands to cherish and to tend it. To you that lamp has been given by those who have watched over it in these ancient colleges. I hope and believe it will not wax duller in your hands, but rather that you will show forth its radiance in whatever part of the world you may be called upon to wield that influence which every educated man must exercise.

“ And how solemn a moment is that passing forth from the cloisters of learning into the great Vanity Fair of the world, there to make, for good or for evil, the choice of Hercules and abide by the result. Even I may, without presumption, indicate to you the crucial importance of that crisis of your lives, when it lies with you to decide whether your career shall be a heritage of woe or a fruitful blessing and an honoured memory. Day by day, the horizon of human possibility, which now lies so unbounded before you, must contract ; the time must come when, under the stroke of illness or the decay of nature, hope, and health, the pride and power of life and intellect, which now seem so inseparable from your triumphant youth, will have passed away. There will then be no surer consolation, humanly speaking, than the consciousness of honest hope fulfilled, of health not abused, of life and intellect exerted in all its strength and fulness, not like water poured upon the sand, but for the raising and bettering in some degree of some portion of your fellow-men. I would fain hope that this living mass of generous youth before me was animated by no less a hope, by no lower an inspiration, and that in coming years it will be my pride and privilege to hear of some of you at any rate receiving the merited praises of grateful mankind.

“ And if I might address your venerable University which has conferred so gracious and so undeserved an honour upon me, I would say, in the words with which the Psalmist

hailed the sacred city, 'They shall prosper that love thee'; that love thee aright, that love thee not merely as an end, but also as a means, as the blessed link with splendid traditions and with noble men, as the faithful guide and the unfailing friend.'

By coincidence, a contest for the Lord Rectorship of Edinburgh University reached its crisis at the same moment. These honourable offices enjoy the almost unique distinction that battles are fiercely waged, often on purely political issues, with no preliminary canvassing or speaking by the candidates themselves. Rosebery, therefore, had been selected by the students, and had agreed to stand, while still holding his office at Aberdeen. It was, in fact, on the morrow of the Aberdeen Address that he became Lord Rector of Edinburgh by a majority of thirty-nine over his Conservative opponent, Sir Robert Christison. It was an extraordinary tribute to his popularity, for Sir Robert, just fifty years his senior, was not only the *doyen* of the great medical school at Edinburgh, and a toxicologist of European reputation, but an engaging and impressive personality, preserving full mental and bodily activity in his old age. Mr. Gladstone had recommended him for a baronetcy in 1871, in spite of his pronounced Tory views.

Again just two years passed before the delivery of the Rectorial Address (November 4th, 1882). Sir Robert Christison had died earlier in the year. The Synod Hall of the United Presbyterian Church was the scene of undergraduate rowdyism surpassing ordinary manifestations of the sort. Professors were violently hustled and bombarded by pea-shooters, furniture was damaged, and the offering of prayer was accompanied by castanets and yells. Party feeling was at a higher temperature than at Aberdeen, parties being more equally balanced. It was all the clearer evidence of Rosebery's power of speech that the Address itself was undisturbed by anything worse than a few chaffing protests and interruptions. He started with grave words of homage to Sir Robert Christison's

memory, and then plunged into the main theme of his discourse—the patriotism of a Scot. After some lively sentences on the freaks to which the unhappy word “patriotism” is subject, the company and costume in which it finds itself, the crime, volubility; and virtue which it inspires, he defined it as “the self-respect of race.” Irish patriotism was too dangerous a ground to venture on; “the English feeling shows itself chiefly in an impatience, if I may so call it, of Scotsmen and Irishmen: perhaps not an unnatural emotion, but not one on which I propose to comment.” After some shrewd observations on re-united Italy, he declared that a country like Scotland, “self-sufficing,” in a real sense, should keep its nationality intact, both for its own sake and that of the Empire of which it is part, “preserving it internally by development, and externally by emulation.” Scotland, he went on, retains the ancient symbols and facts of independence in its systems of religion, and law, and of education, and these are to be watched with special care, because of the excellencies dividing them from other such systems, not mere peculiarities and catchwords of form. Ease of communication and “the centralisation of Anglicising empire” had destroyed and was destroying many of the old landmarks of national character, “effigies and splendours of tradition.” These leave and teach their lessons; but

“the dream of him who loved Scotland best would lie not so much in the direction of antiquarian revival, as in the hope that his country might be pointed out as one that, in spite of rocks, and rigour, and poverty, could yet teach the world by precept and example, could lead the van and point the moral where greater and fairer states had failed.”

The Address closed with an appeal to his young students to make the best of their wide opportunities of influencing their fellow-men in different walks of life, trusting that “the great wave of learned life that will roll from these walls . . . will neither

wreck nor strand the vessel of State, but help to bear it safely on."

Rosebery became Lord Rector of Glasgow in 1899; but St. Andrews, the most cautiously conservative of Scottish universities, did not honour him thus till 1910. These later Addresses will be noticed in their time.

Through those years of political movement and sociable diversion Rosebery's friends kept asking themselves whether he intended to marry, and how soon. William Cory wrote to Reginald Brett¹ (1878): "I am sorry Rosebery is still addicted to *badinage*; let him fall in love." When he went repeatedly to America, it was thought not unlikely that he might return thence with a bride. In 1874 his close friend Randolph Churchill became engaged to the brilliant and beautiful Miss Jennie Jerome of New York; and, two years later, Lord Mandeville, the Duke of Manchester's heir, married Miss Consuelo Yznaga, whose wit and high spirits were to charm her own and the next generation in London for many years. Then, as now, there was plenty of beauty and attraction in the West. In a letter to Sam Ward he wrote (February 16th, 1874): "Make it a point to tell me in your next how Miss — (not yet formally 'out') whom I took in to dinner at her uncle's house, and who lives at Washington, is looking. She is a thing of Beauty, and I meditate over her as over a sonnet." And with another charming and most admirable young lady, not of Washington, things went further, so that an engagement between them was freely reported on both sides of the Atlantic. But unless his affections were irreparably involved, there was nothing to make an early marriage urgently desirable.

He was warmly attached to his brother Everard, who would carry on the succession in case of accidents; he had troops of excellent and amusing friends, men and women, old and young. He was pleasantly quartered in his bachelor's house, No. 2 Berkeley

¹ *Ionicus*, p. 88.

Square, where he could return, on a small scale, the profuse hospitality which sought him from all sides. Money was also, in some degree, a question. He had started with a good income, but always gave generously, and liked buying many things, some of which were costly. There was his racing-stable, and, in spite of his reply to "Uncle Sam's" friendly hint, he became in a degree "dipped" by this, or, rather, by occasional betting on a high scale. He lived in a wealthy and lavish world, and did as others did. Survivors of that generation will recall that to avoid a long wait at a cold country station, or even a crawling train journey, it was comfortable to take a special train ; it might cost five-and-twenty pounds ; but "What's a pony ?" was a natural question in those untaxed days. A dowerless marriage might mean, then, a reduced scale of living of a kind galling to a proud nature. His public career, of which the lines could, by now, be pretty nearly traced, would be hampered by the necessity of taking thought for the morrow. It was therefore wiser to wait. But, liking women's society as he did, he was intensely attractive to them ; once, certainly, there was the possibility of an English alliance for which the high-bred beauty and womanly charm of the other partner would have justified a happy forecast.

Meanwhile, he had long inspired the most utter devotion in a heart capable of the finest feelings. He had been introduced to Hannah de Rothschild—in a strange enough combination of place and person—by Mrs. Disraeli at Newmarket. The anomaly came from the matron, not the maiden, for her father, Baron Meyer de Rothschild, was a leading figure at "Headquarters," and had a house there.¹ He was the youngest of the four sons of Baron Nathan Meyer de Rothschild, who came to England in 1798 and founded the London branch of the cosmopolitan banking house.

¹ In some books of reference the name is given as Mayer, which may have been the original form in Germany, but he was always known here as Baron Meyer.

He with his two elder brothers, who were partners—the third having settled in Paris—when not immersed in European finance at New Court, led the lives of country gentlemen in the Vale of Aylesbury, where they occupied a remarkable enclave of more or less contiguous properties. The Rothschild stag-hounds brought crowds of hard-riding visitors to hustle over a fine grass country ; and all the brothers took an interest in the Turf. Baron Meyer was the most conspicuous and successful, his great year being 1871, when he owned the champion colt and the champion filly of that season, the latter being named after his daughter. He married in 1850 Juliana Cohen, a most accomplished wearer of that well-known name, and Hannah was their only child. The health of both parents broke down early ; in 1873 the Baron's nephew, Baron Ferdinand, wrote to Rosebery that Mentmore was completely shut up (November 5th, 1873), adding : “ I feel a bitter pang for the owner, who has been so cruelly smitten in the prime of life.”

In the following year Baron Meyer died, and his wife's nervous illness became more and more acute until her death in 1877. He left an enduring monument in Mentmore and its village ; an amazing creation of a great house, a wide park, and noble gardens, transmuted, as by the hand of a genie, from its first state of rolling pastures sloping up to the crest of a foothill of the Chilterns, and dotted with fattening bullocks. Joseph Paxton, more famous as landscape gardener than as architect, built the house, borrowing the general plan from Wollaton, the famous home of the Willoughby family near Nottingham, but using the lovely buttercup Oxford stone, and not conforming slavishly to the Tudor model. Such an exterior positively cried out for splendid fitting within. The great central hall was exactly framed to show tapestry at its best, and to display, as few rooms in England can, the massively gorgeous furniture of the Italian Renaissance. The very finest French work of the eighteenth century, some of it with Marie Antoinette's

own cypher, found a place in the drawing-rooms, and there was a wealth of Limoges enamels and of Sèvres china, together with some Italian and Dutch master-pieces. Seventy years ago good taste, backed by a large fortune, could acquire such treasures at prices which nowadays sound moderate, and Baron Meyer, with his wife and her devoted sisters, made many journeys to Italy and Germany in search of them. Everything passed to his daughter. It is often an irreparable misfortune either for a young woman or for a young man to succeed early to a great inheritance; but nobody was ever less spoilt by it than Hannah de Rothschild. Divine wisdom warns, “ How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ”; but if that Kingdom is a place into which unkindness, and petty self-love, and lack of charity cannot penetrate, and where only things of good report abound, those who knew Hannah de Rothschild, either in her girlhood or through her married years, could never doubt that she was one of the happy souls for whom its gates are always standing open. It was indeed a very noble character, and she added to much native wit and no small intellectual capacity all the accomplishments encouraged by elaborate training in the best schools.

Rosebery was on terms of friendly intimacy with Baron and Baroness Meyer, and was several times their guest both at Newmarket and at Mentmore. With much community of tastes and serious interests, it might seem natural that he and Hannah de Rothschild should contemplate a life partnership. Her feelings, as I have said, were early awakened. But obstacles existed on both sides, particularly hers. One of her aunts, and two of her cousins, had indeed married Christians; but she was devoutly attached to her faith, and for her such an alliance necessarily meant a severe moral wrench. In the Rothschild family intermarriage between the different branches had become almost a custom: Baron Lionel’s eldest son and both his daughters had married cousins of

the French or the German house, and it may have been anticipated that the only child of another English partner would do likewise. She was completely independent, and had nobody's permission to ask ; but the disapproval of a singularly united family would not be an easy thing to face.

Nor was such an alliance altogether easy for the bridegroom, in spite of all its material advantages. His family was ancient, though not so illustrious as to suggest an Austrian attitude towards a marriage lacking sixteen quarterings ; but he felt, and continued to feel in a degree which few of his friends realised then or since, the invisible but impassable barrier which difference of faith erects between those who believe at all, without the slightest impairing of trust or of affection. It will be told how, when the end came twelve years later, he had to suffer on his side of the dividing gulf. On the other hand, he was entirely devoid of the anti-Semitic prejudice which socially was less acute throughout Europe fifty years ago than it afterwards became ; he was on very friendly terms with the three sons of Baron Lionel de Rothschild. One of these, Leopold, wrote in 1877 : " You are always such a true friend to all our family." And at that time he was more intimate still with their Austrian cousin and brother-in-law, Baron Ferdinand, who had settled in England and entered Parliament after the tragically early death of his wife Evelina, Baron Lionel's daughter. Baron Ferdinand was a man of the finest taste in art, and created on a hill near Aylesbury the palace and park of Waddesdon. He was one of Rosebery's most regular correspondents both before and after his friend's marriage to Hannah de Rothschild, and a repertory of social and political gossip, presented with much detail and some humour. As early as 1876 there were rumours of an engagement, and even unauthorised announcements in newspapers. Eighteen months passed, and the reports were confirmed. Three-and-twenty years later Rosebery wrote to Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild (January 3rd, 1901) :



MENTMORE.

‘ This is not New Year’s Day, but far more sacred to me, for it is the anniversary of my engagement.’ La Rochefoucauld lays it down : “ Il y a de bons mariages, mais il n’y en a point de délicieux.” This will be denied with righteous indignation, but there are many prosperous alliances based on warm liking and mutual esteem. This was of another sort. It was founded on admiration and warm affection on the one side, admiration and adoring devotion on the other. For all its glittering outside it possessed the quality of wearing well, which has made proverbial the wedding-gown of a very different Primrose bride. The marriage was celebrated on March 20th, 1878, first civilly at the Board-room of the Guardians in Mount Street, and afterwards at Christ Church in Down Street, Piccadilly.¹ The latter ceremony was attended by troops of friends of both families, headed by the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge, and Lord Beaconsfield gave away the bride. William Rogers, the Rector of Bishopsgate, officiated. This admirable and liberally minded man, like some Abbés of the best sort, made it his business to interest his friends of the more fortunate class in the educational and social good work of which he was an apostle. He had the gift of doing this effectively and manfully, without a tinge of sycophancy or any sacrifice of principle.

Rosebery had long enjoyed his friendship, and since 1874 had been interested in the schools at Bishopsgate. Prebendary Rogers, in return, looked out keenly for the racing successes of his friends, just as Charles Kingsley might have done. Lord Dalhousie, a dear friend of Rosebery’s, well noted by John Morley² as “ one of the truest hearts ever attracted to public life,” was one of the Rogers circle, and Lord London-

¹ The diary volume for 1878 is almost blank except for the entries :
January 3rd : “ Engaged to be married at 4.20 p.m.” and
March 20th : “ Married. 1. At the Workhouse in Mount Street
 and 2. At Church in Down Street.
 To Petworth for honeymoon.”

² *Life of Gladstone*, bk. ix, ch. v, § ii.

derry was another. Sadly crippled by arthritic rheumatism, he was always gay, and always helpful.

Socially there was no abrupt change in the life of either partner in the marriage. They started with a large common acquaintance, and each became more and more friendly with the special allies of the other. Rosebery's intimacy with the Rothschild cousins grew closer, and in January he assisted at the wedding of Leopold de Rothschild with Miss Marie Perugia (January 19th, 1881). Her elder sister Louise, Mrs. Arthur Sassoon, was already an admired and popular figure in London. A lifelong bond of affectionate friendship united Rosebery and his wife to both the sisters and their husbands. There was a large circle of political affinities whose names recur throughout this story, and there was a smaller coterie of which Marlborough House was the central luminary, some members of which also frequented Newmarket. Rosebery's list of special intimates included Francis Knollys, not less distinguished for his office of trusted Private Secretary to the Prince of Wales than for uncompromising utterance of Radical sentiments; and Harry Tyrrwhitt-Wilson, later Knollys's brother-in-law—gay, reckless, the ideal companion of an idle hour, gifted with no small share of native wit. Another intimate was Christopher Sykes, often Rosebery's companion in visits to Paris. It was still the custom fifty years ago, in some stately country houses, to find huge amusement in the generally harmless but often rough pleasantries popular with subalterns of a sporting regiment. Christopher Sykes was often the subject of such jokes, for no very obvious reason. He joined in them with sufficient good humour; but he was in reality a man of no little shrewdness and observation, who, when it came to repartee, could give his not too brilliant banterers more than they bargained for. Lord Carrington, a cousin of the Primrose family, and another close associate of the Prince of Wales from early childhood, was an intimate of the circle. He was one of Rosebery's most regular

correspondents, unlading a copious farrago of social and political doings and chances. Always an enthusiastic party man, he can hardly have foreseen, in those gay days, the tribute of admiring affection which Lord Lincolnshire, five-and-forty years older in years, but not a day older in heart, would receive from all Liberals, and from many who were not Liberals.

Lord Fife, lately succeeded to the family honours, was another star in the Marlborough House firmament ; and of the racing contingent Rosebery's closest intimates were Sir Frederick Johnstone, cynical and rather caustic, but a most loyal comrade ; William Gerard, rather similar in type, but in addition a dispenser of the most reckless good humour ; and, of a slightly later generation, Lord Durham. Some of the attributes of his famous grandfather had descended to this last. Destined to suffer the cruellest blows of fortune, he was endowed with such courage and persistence and loyalty, with capacity for single-minded affection, as, his friends will agree, have hardly a parallel in their memory. From his Oxford days Rosebery had also been closely bound to the Vyner family. Lady Mary Vyner, the last representative, with her sister Lady Cowper, of the great family of Grey, Earls and Dukes of Kent, had always shown him kindness. Her son Frederick was one of the victims of Greek brigands in the Marathon tragedy, and Rosebery organised the memorial to him in Christ Church Cathedral. The eldest brother Clare, and Robert, the youngest, were both active on the Turf. Clare never married, and died comparatively young ; but Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vyner remained close friends of Rosebery's as long as they lived. Such, in outline, was the lighter side of Rosebery's existence. But in this country, as in no other, there is sometimes an intermingling of orbits, as when, on the Friday of one Epsom Summer Meeting, Rosebery's guests at dinner at the Durdans were Mr. Gladstone, Clare Vyner, Frederick Johnstone, Billy Gerard, and another votary of the Turf. There is no record of

that evening, but it may well have been a pleasant though an unusual one.

Somewhat to anticipate events—Lady Rosebery entered keenly into the marching and countermarching of the political field. Before her marriage she had been acquainted with most of the principal figures that thronged it, and friendly with some of them, for the Rothschild filaments were widely spread. She meant to be in the thick of the fray, after winning her spurs in the Midlothian campaign. Through the months of 1880, when Rosebery had to decline office, first from scruple, afterwards from illness, the party leaders were perpetually consulting her, and urging her to influence him. In reply she kept dwelling on the depression of his spirits and on the certainty of his speedy recovery. She had to realise that the political veil has its seamy side. “I was perfectly astounded to hear of the numbers of people who ask for office.” And some of the Ministers could not, or would not, understand Rosebery’s attitude. Even Mr. Gladstone, she thought, did not take it in.

“Mr. and Mrs. G. dined with us [August 1880]. After dinner I seized a moment to talk about Archie, and said I wished he had some work to do, as I believed it was what his brain required and should do good to his physical health. He answered, alluding to official work, ‘But then there is nothing now to give him.’ I was horrified at seeming to hint at office, when I meant nothing of the sort, and endeavoured to explain I meant to work at a subject. Mr. Gladstone may be a marvel of erudition, but he will never understand a man, still less a woman.”

A harassed Prime Minister may be excused for supposing that this particular woman, an adoring wife, was thinking of her husband’s political future. At the same time she observed how kind Sir William Harcourt was in often coming to see them, and how Sir Charles Dilke was equally thoughtful. He and Joseph Chamberlain evidently hoped to secure Rosebery as an adherent to the Radical wing of the

Ministry ; but in the early summer of 1881 the wife's eagle eye remarked a change, because nothing more had been heard of the project that Rosebery and the two Ministers of the Left should jointly address various meetings in the country. Lord Northbrook was another who found favour in her eyes. But she thought that Lords Granville and Hartington kept somewhat aloof ; and in spite of Lord Spencer's pleasantness, " I never can look on him as a great motive power. Besides he does not mention Archie to me."

CHAPTER VI

MIDLOTHIAN: GLADSTONE'S SECOND GOVERNMENT

THE Administration of 1874 had expended its debonair youth; in its maturity it had revelled in the spectacular return from Berlin; though beset by some fears, it was beginning to count on a renewal of its mandate at a not distant General Election. The Opposition, if not exactly distracted, was certainly not united; and the formal retirement from the stage of Mr. Gladstone was seen to be compatible with the occasional emergence of his figure from the wings, when it attracted greater attention than those of the other actors. He had denounced in trumpet tones the barbarities inflicted on the Christian subjects of the Porte, regarded by Lord Beaconsfield's Government as unlucky incidents in a complicated political story. A great moral issue had been raised, to which Britain, mindful of past crusades, might not remain indifferent. It was thus beginning to be clear that the leader's retirement was not in truth final. His physical powers were as amazing as those of Lord Palmerston and his electric mental energy had in no way abated. Oxford had long since rejected him; he was member for Greenwich; but if he were to resume great place, he ought to represent some town of historical fame, or some centre of industrial activity. The West Riding of Yorkshire (*quantum mutatus* in these advanced days) was then a rallying-post of Liberalism. Leeds was the Mecca of the faith, where the commercial magnates were for the most part pillars of sturdy Nonconformity, and where the *Leeds Mercury*, owned by the powerful Baines clan, and skilfully conducted by T. Wemyss Reid, was the official Liberal organ in the provinces. It would be all the more natural for Mr. Gladstone to contest a

Leeds constituency, as one of his principal lieutenants, Lord Ripon, the most prominent of the Radical Whigs who were political heirs of Fox and Grey, was a near neighbour and actively interested in the industrial and educational progress of the city. However, a contest for a selected Yorkshire seat would be little more than a walk-over for Mr. Gladstone. If he could be got to assault some Tory stronghold he would not be electorally wasted.

Just such a Giant's Castle was the county of Midlothian, for which Lord Dalkeith, the son of the fifth Duke of Buccleuch, was the sitting member. He had been first returned in 1853, when only twenty-two years old ; he had shared the defeat of many Tories in 1868, but had regained the seat in 1874 by a considerable majority. Not a man of commanding ability, he was of distinguished manners, sound intelligence, and the highest character. The family influence was overwhelming, based on the possession of some 430,000 well-administered acres in eight different Lowland counties, including a moderate-sized, but very valuable, estate close to Edinburgh. But the fifth Duke was no mere Marquis de Carabas. He and Mr. Gladstone had been colleagues, for he had been first Lord Privy Seal and afterwards President of the Council in Sir Robert Peel's second Government, resigning with it in 1845, and not rejoining to drink his share of "the poisoned chalice." Mr. Gladstone once told me that Sir James Graham agreed with him that the Duke was fully competent to take charge of any great Department of State. This was "approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley," for Sir James, by common consent, was the ablest of Victorian administrators. So that, when the Midlothian Liberals, at Rosebery's instance, urged the veteran champion to enter these lists, they were hazarding much. The failure of such a raid would verge on the ridiculous ; and Rosebery would incur the reproach of compromising the cause in Scotland by an ill-timed adventure. But the prize was proportionately rich if it could be won.

Thus began Rosebery's close personal intimacy with Gladstone and his family. They had been well acquainted for years. Rosebery had been pressed to join the Government, and he had often been a guest at the Downing Street breakfasts and other entertainments. On April 5th, 1875, he wrote that he had brought from Scotland the American madeira of which he had spoken, two or three bottles of which he asked Mr. Gladstone to do him the honour to accept. "I now forward them," he wrote, "and hope you will be interested in these specimens of perhaps the only aristocracy which the United States deigns to recognise, for Murdoch Madeira there may almost be called a governing caste." But to a superficial onlooker it might have seemed that there was little in common between the old and the young man, separated by the gulf of nearly forty years. The one was a life-long scholar, the fine flower of academic culture, a Churchman first and foremost, and a grave figure in the social world. The other was brilliant as a meteor, a favourite in gay coteries, and a votary of the Turf. It might appear to represent the contrast between the library of the Athenæum and the bow window of White's Club. But the onlooker would have been wrong.

One thing intolerable to Gladstone was a flippant approach to grave matters. He found in Rosebery a character that might take some trivial things too seriously, but would never treat serious things lightly. Nor could Gladstone ever comprehend how any superior intellect could be disfigured, as some are, by a shallow streak of coarseness. Rosebery certainly never posed as a Puritan to him or to anybody else, or affected to be insensible to some of the allurements of "the nether sphere, the fleeting hour." Genuine humour always appealed to him, even in unrepresentable forms. But his mind was essentially refined, and he was capable of the utmost disgust where his taste was offended. Again, there was much common ground, not obvious to the

bystander, in Rosebery's genuine bookishness, and in his perpetual interest in ecclesiastical personages and their doings. Lastly, his leader could not fail to recognise in him a touch of the quality ever-present in himself—the moral indignation that blazed up at the view of anything cowardly or treacherous or tyrannical. We sometimes smile at those who, not sharing their friends' pleasures, are less tolerant of these than of their vices. Gladstone never fostered such small prejudices and disapprovals. He was not interested in racing, though there was a legend that he had once surprised a convivial party by reciting a long list of Derby winners. But he liked the old ways ; and if Hartington or Rosebery enjoyed breeding or running horses, as landowners and statesmen had done for generations in the past, he saw no reason to object to them, any more than to Spencer's hereditary pack of hounds.

Rosebery was now becoming the most conspicuous figure in the Liberal group of the Scottish Lowlands. The Duke of Argyll's impressive character, and his gorgeous eloquence, had hitherto won him undisputed supremacy not only in the Western Highlands but in the academic world of all Scotland ; but here, close to the capital, stood out a younger man, giving promise of similar oratorical power, with the added grace of wit, captivating to the university mind, and likely to appeal equally to a wider circle outside. This first Midlothian campaign was to establish Rosebery once for all, before he was three-and-thirty, as the standard-bearer of Scottish hopes and Scottish ideals.

Since October 1878, and his slashing attack on the Government at Aberdeen, Rosebery had not been active on the platform. The Midlothian campaign of 1879–80 belongs to Gladstone's biography, not to his, and must be briefly treated here. It was suggested in 1878 that Mr. Gladstone might contest an Edinburgh seat, but it was not till January 1879 that the Liberal Committee of the County of Midlothian made

their offer, which was strongly backed by Mr. W. P. Adam, the Scottish Whip. It would be a "tooth and nail affair," Mr. Gladstone noted.¹ In August Rosebery wrote offering the hospitality of Dalmeny to the candidate and his family, and on November 24th the triumphal procession from Liverpool to Edinburgh, punctuated by speeches at Carlisle, Hawick, and Galashiels, opened the campaign. The drive from Waverley Station, *à la Daumont*, through thronged streets with lights gleaming in every window, is still remembered by Edinburgh veterans. On the last day of the month Rosebery presided at a great meeting in the Corn Exchange, and at a huge open-air "demonstration" at Waverley Market. At the former he recalled the banquet to Lord Grey in 1834, at which his grandfather had been Chairman, "the deliverance of our country from the house of bondage—bondage of mock constituencies, controlled by great landowners and crafty wire-pullers" (laughter and cheers).²

"Full of years and of honours, followed in his career by his country with a strange mixture of tenderness and pride, at an age when body and mind alike invite repose, the illustrious statesman has come down to fight one supreme battle in the cause of freedom. He has passed through one long series of well-ordered triumphs. From his home in Wales to the Metropolis of Scotland, there has been no village too small to afford a crowd to greet him—there has been no cottager so humble that could not find a light to put in his window as he passed. Mothers have brought their babes to lisp a 'hurrah,' old men have crept forth from their homes to see him before they died. These have been no prepared ebullitions of sympathy; these have been no calculated demonstrations. The heart of the nation has been touched. And, Gentlemen, we to-day have nothing to do with the special business which has brought Mr. Gladstone down to

¹ Mr. Gladstone to Lord Granville, January 11th, 1879. *Life of Gladstone*, bk. vii, ch. vi.

² At this election the creation of "faggot votes" was understood to have been undertaken on a vast scale by the Tory organisers in Midlothian.



BARNBOUGLE—GENERAL VIEW.

Scotland. This is no electoral meeting. We are here to-day, electors and non-electors, Liberals from every part of the United Kingdom, one with another, come to pay respect to the intellect which has inspired our Liberalism and to the leader who has led our party to victory. On the colours which were borne to triumph in 1868 his name is inscribed. And, though these colours are tattered now, they are none the less glorious for that. Others may enjoy the place—others do enjoy the place and the power which he held so worthily then. But there is one place and one power which, as none can give him none can take from him: the power is the power of a great intellect, moved by the highest virtue and the purest patriotism—the place is the place in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen."

On the tremendous day of December 5th at Glasgow, when Gladstone, after his Rectorial Address of an hour and a half, and a speech after luncheon in the University Hall, enthralled an audience of 6,000 for another hour and a half in the afternoon, and finished his day by an address after dinner to a great audience in the City Hall, Rosebery was not allowed to be silent, though he naturally confined himself to a short, telling improvisation. But the shouts that dragged him to his feet showed that it was not Edinburgh alone that hailed him as the rising star of Scotland.

Christmas came, and a short stay abroad for Rosebery and his wife. Hannah Rosebery had come to Dalmeny at the end of October to prepare for the political visit. They returned from Nice in February 1880, and Rosebery was almost at once laid low by a sharp attack of scarlet fever, at that period the most prevalent and the most dreaded of zymotic diseases. So that when Mr. Gladstone turned north again in the middle of March, Rosebery had by no means recovered his full strength. But he was again host at Dalmeny, this time for three weeks; and his disability as a Peer served to spare him most of the daily and nightly exertions which would have tried even his powerful constitution. But he attended the dinner of the Glasgow University Gladstone Club

(March 29th, 1880), and fastened sharply on the Foreign Policy of the Government, dwelling caustically on the tributes of admiration paid to it by statesmen of the Continent whose interests were directly opposed to our own. “ We are told that the Opposition to which we belong is detested by the Powers varying in importance, and all quoted *in extenso*.” He asked who was so much disliked by every foreign Power as Lord Palmerston, who was regarded by the Tories as the *beau idéal* of a Foreign Minister.

“ I believe that our watchword in Foreign Policy will be the cause of England, peace, and freedom throughout the world. When I say peace I do not mean peace at any price, when I say freedom I do not mean licence ; when I say England, I mean not merely these two islands ; I mean the great Empire throughout the world, which we are as proud of as any Tory possibly can be, which we will maintain even with our blood if necessary, but which we will not recklessly increase at the cost of the people of England.”

A still more important occasion, just before the poll, was the Inaugural Banquet of the Scottish Liberal Club at Edinburgh (March 31st), when Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were among the guests. A number of Scottish Peers were present, and other representative Scotsmen, among whom the name of Campbell-Bannerman is conspicuous. Rosebery, speaking from the Chair, again dealt mainly with foreign politics, but he also referred to an observation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House of Commons a month before. Sir Stafford Northcote had said that whenever the subject of Peers’ interference with elections occurred to his mind, it was always associated with the name of Rosebery. The object of this attack had already consulted Mr. Gladstone. Writing from his sick-room at 107 Piccadilly by his wife’s hand, he asked :

“ Ought I to take any notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s little innuendo last night ? I call it ‘ little ’ for

the Leader of the House of Commons : in a lesser personage I should call it an impertinence. I have, as you know, never interfered in Midlothian : I have never canvassed for you : I have never spoken on your behalf : I have not even attended your meetings. The most I am guilty of is the having had the honour of receiving you at my house, which even in the present ostracism of yourself and the Liberal Party can hardly be deemed an offence against the privilege of the House of Commons. However, on the whole, I am inclined to do nothing. If you agree with this view, take no notice of this letter. If I do write a note I would enclose to you a copy of the one I should send."

In the result Rosebery confined himself to an expansion in this speech of what he had written to Gladstone :

" During last November I had the public misfortune, as regards the good opinion of Sir Stafford Northcote, but the great happiness of my life as concerns myself, to entertain in my house your distinguished guest. Proscribed and hunted as our party is, I never knew, till it fell from the lips of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the very right of asylum is denied to the arch-criminal of his country."

Party feeling was running high, but it is singular to note Rosebery's use of expressions which sounded excessive at the time, but became literally applicable a few years later, when the Irish Question was not only to rend the Liberal party but to shatter not a few private friendships.

The poll was declared on April 5th, Gladstone's majority being 211. The voters numbered 2,947, a ludicrously small figure for an earth-shaking contest, it would be said to-day. Meanwhile, at Leeds, where he had been nominated without his consent, over 24,000 voters had returned him, with a majority of upwards of eleven thousand over his Conservative opponent. Rosebery had taken a house in George Street, Edinburgh, for the Midlothian contest, and the victor noted : " Fifteen thousand people being gathered in George Street, I spoke very shortly from

the windows, and Rosebery followed, excellently well.” Rosebery’s was also a very brief speech, celebrating the victory won for constitutional government, and for oppressed nationalities throughout the world, concluding thus :

“ To use the words of Mr. Pitt, I will only say that I trust that Midlothian, having saved herself by her exertions, will now save Great Britain by her example.”

Gladstone’s letter of thanks to his host and hostess is given at length in the *Life*¹ ; I quote a few material sentences :

“ As to Midlothian, the moral effect, before and after, has I think surpassed all our hopes. The feeling until it was over was so fastened on it, that it was almost like one of the occasions of old when the issue of battle was referred to single combat. The great merit of it, I apprehend, lay in the original conception, which I take to have been yours, and to overshadow even your operations towards the direct production of the result. But one thing it cannot overshadow in my mind : the sense of the inexpressible aid and comfort derived day by day from your considerate, ever-watchful care and tact. . . . It is a very pleasant subject of reflection to me that the riveting effect of companionship in a struggle like this does not pass away with the struggle itself, but abides.”

This letter crossed one from Rosebery to Gladstone dated the previous day :

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ I cannot tell you the immense and overpowering sense of relief that I feel after the events which have occurred. I always thought that the stimulus and inspiration which Liberalism required must come from you and that the proper tripod for you was Scotland ; and if Scotland then Midlothian. The intensity (to put the qualities aside) required was only to be found in Scotland and yourself. But I have never disguised from myself that we had to fight agencies extremely powerful and absolutely unscrupulous, and that in engaging you to lend us your name and your energies we were accepting

¹ Bk. vii, ch. viii. Hawarden, April 10th, 1880.

responsibilities which in my view were quite appalling. These pressed upon me when physically weak perhaps even more than when I was stronger, but I have often thought during the last two months that I could not have survived your defeat.

“ And now all is over I am lost in an immense thankfulness, and I have had an overpowering reward. Our little country has answered its purpose, and has been the pivot on which you have turned the country. That has been my first happiness. My second has been this : that owing to this contest I have had the privilege which I could never otherwise have had of seeing you and knowing you (if I may use the word without impertinence) more closely than I could ever otherwise have done. The reverence I had before has become enveloped in a warmer feeling to you and yours, and I cannot help on this one occasion, what I could not do again without disrespect, signing myself as I feel

“ Yours affectionately,
“ ROSEBERY.”

It is a pleasant reflection, and one that could hardly arise in any country but Britain, that this vehement political struggle did not break up Rosebery's personal relations with the Buccleuch family. The old Duke died in 1884 : Rosebery maintained a cordial friendship with his successor, the defeated candidate, and with the new Duchess, one of the Duke of Abercorn's daughters, of a family with which he had been intimate from his boyhood—and the following generation at Dalkeith and Drumlanrig did not fail to continue the tradition.

The inevitable return to power of Gladstone, and the formation of his second Ministry, form part of the history of the country. It was generally surmised that Rosebery would receive some office, and the usual crop of newspaper conjectures placed him in a Vice-royalty, in an embassy, and in the Cabinet itself. Mr. Gladstone always desired to follow “ Peel's rule against admitting anybody straight into the Cabinet without having held previous office.” He had to break it sometimes, as with Bright in 1868 and Joseph Chamberlain in 1880 ; but these were older men, picked from outside the traditional band of young

Peers and Members of Parliament, for whom an Under-Secretaryship in their thirties might mean admission to the Cabinet in ten or fifteen years' time.

Rosebery himself found it difficult to think of office at all. Sensitive to a degree which few comprehended then or afterwards, he had been cut to the quick by such criticisms as that of Sir Stafford Northcote, repeated in a coarser form by less refined opponents. Queen Victoria, noting for Sir Henry Ponsonby her conversation with Lord Granville, wrote (April 28th, 1880) : "Lord Rosebery would accept nothing, as he said it would look as if Mr. Gladstone had paid him for what he had done."

His letter to the Prime Minister, in answer to the offer of the Under-Secretaryship of the India Office, states his attitude less crudely (April 25th, 1880) :

Most Confidential.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"In the first place let me thank you for the great honour you have offered me. There could not be a more attractive post for a young man ; for there is real distinction to be won in holding one's own against such odds in the House of Lords, while defeat would not necessarily imply disgrace ; there is much to gain and little to lose.

"As regards the labour of it, anybody beginning departmental work for the first time must expect hard work, and one can only do one's best. People cannot rise in politics by sinecures, and I being new to the business should have to work hard in any department.

"As regards the chief of it, I do not think I need say anything.

"I have lain awake nearly all night thinking it over, for of course to me it is the most critical moment of my life. I cannot deny that for some time past it has seemed to me possible that this period of trial might come : otherwise it would have been useless for me to take the resolution that I did. But now that the crisis has come I must face it. If I take this appointment, I lose the certainty that what I have done in the matter of the elections, however slight, has been disinterested. In losing that I lose more than political distinction could repay me : I should feel that where I only

meant personal devotion and public spirit, others would see, and perhaps with reason, personal ambition and public office seeking. If either Hartington or Granville had been Prime Minister, kind friends as they have always been of mine, they could not have given me so high a post, for I have done nothing to deserve it.

“No, with all gratitude to you, I must remain as I am. Yesterday is a day I can never forget, when I sat with you treated like a son and in possession of this high proof of your confidence and esteem. The memory of that no one can take away from me, whatever motives may be assigned for my answer (which however no one need ever know) while I shall always continue in however obscure a position

“Your sincere and devoted follower,

AR.¹

“This is for your eye alone—I am writing to Hartington by this same messenger.”

He also wrote to Miss Mary Gladstone, her father’s confidante, with whom he and his wife had established a firm friendship (April 27th, 1880) :

“Many thanks for your kind little note which has cheered me very much. I find heroism is difficult to people who are not heroes.

“There is nothing ‘grand’ in what I have done, for I had literally no option in the matter. Nothing but the resolution I took could have enabled me to get through the election, or to have lived with your father on terms of frankness and freedom. When you analyse my motive it is little more than a half selfish sacrifice to peace of mind. Moreover, my real motives are so well known that it would be waste of time in me to dilate on them. They are :

“1. Annoyance at not being asked to join the Cabinet.

“2. Dislike of hard work. 3. Passion for the Turf.

“However that may be, my heart is so full in response to your note that I do not trust myself to write. God bless and preserve your father in the great work before him, and all of you to help and sustain him.”

For a man in his thirty-third year, generally credited with a political future, to decline a secondary

¹ For convenience in printing, the “A” and the “R” are separated, though Lord Roseberry always used them in monogram, as may be seen in the reproduction of the letter on page 417.

office to which nobody could have thought him unequal, simply because he had been the host of the Prime Minister during his election, might seem almost morbidly scrupulous. But few will blame such an excess of carefulness on a field where fine scruples are apt to grow stunted and to wither. As a matter of fact, there were physical reasons besides. In June Hannah Rosebery wrote to Mrs. Gladstone in answer to inquiries about her husband :

“ Your letter is more than kind, and if anything could encourage Archie to three months’ exile, it will be your affectionate recommendation of fresh air and rest. He has promised to endeavour to carry out the doctors’ injunctions, and though they assure me there is no cause for any nervousness, still I am much relieved at his decision to follow their advice.”

He himself noted that the stars in their courses fought against him, and the warning of the famous Edinburgh physician, Matthews Duncan, that if he neglected his cure he might become useless for life—“ he has a friend, a doctor, who was in the same position and neglected it, and is now done with. They say scarlet fever changes or affects every pore in one’s skin.” There can be no doubt that Rosebery paid for his too early activity in the Scottish campaign by perilous approach to a complete breakdown. It was thought that the gradually ascending levels from Homburg to Gastein, and Gastein to St. Moritz, would restore the tone that he had lost. And so it proved, though there were one or two disappointing relapses of great fatigue. The offer of the Indian Under-Secretaryship was renewed, rather prematurely, as it happened, and was again declined, in the following rather depressed terms :

Confidential. 1 HÔTEL DE L’EUROPE, SALZBURG, July 14th, 1880.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ Your kind note was put into my hand as I was leaving Homburg on Monday.

¹ This letter was posted from Gastein on July 16th.

" It is quite unnecessary for me to thank you for this new proof of your confidence. You will know what I feel without my telling you.

" As regards the reason I gave before for my inability to accept the same invitation you now renew I confess it seems to me no longer applicable. There have been intervals, stormy intervals, since then, which make the place appear at the present moment less an undeserved reward than a call to duty.

" On the other hand I may say in strict secrecy that I no longer feel the confidence I did then that my position with regard to my immediate chief would be as mutually agreeable as I then fancied. That opinion however regards him and not me, and is not one perhaps that I have any right to mingle with the general question.

" But the absolute, miserable, and decisive reason that now compels me to hold aloof is my health. It is a disagreeable subject to dwell upon. Yet I must say that I am not as well as when I went to Homburg, in spite of two days when I thought otherwise. I do not know what is the matter with me, medically speaking, but speaking as the patient, it is prostration physical and mental. I felt tired when I left London, but not the annihilation of the present moment. As it happened, two hours after I got your letter, I saw a famous doctor in Frankfurt, who had never seen me before. He knew all about the Midlothian business and about me, and, strangely enough, said, ' I saw that Mr. Gladstone had offered you office and that you had refused.' I replied that you had offered me office again that morning, in order to find out what he thought. He screamed out at the idea, said it was out of the question, and that three months' office now would do me more harm than ten years' hard work hereafter. I believe he is right, but at present I know I am good for nothing. Whether I shall ever be good for anything is a question I ask myself all day long. You offer to let me remain abroad for a time, but I do not feel as if I could do that. I doubt if I could remain in the state of absolute inactivity that the doctors say is necessary for restoration to health, if I felt that I had duties elsewhere to the public : more especially if I knew, as I know, that my post would be eagerly coveted by some who would be of real use in these troubled times.

" It is a strange fate that compels me to refuse the same position twice in three months and for different reasons.

It is needless for me to say how painful it is. I hope I am neither a fool nor a hypochondriac. Whether I ever become one or the other I know that I am like a sucked orange now, and that it would be criminal in me to undertake any public function.

“Excuse the length of this letter and believe me always
“Yours very sincerely,
“AR.”

The passage referring to Hartington reads strangely, for there was no Minister with whom Rosebery was on closer terms of friendship based on community of tastes and on mutual respect for each other's personal qualities. Hartington himself wrote at length (August 9th), pressing him to reconsider the offer :

“I think you would like the office. At this moment I hate it as I should hate any office; but if it were not for the waste of time in everlasting attendance at the House, which makes all official work a burden, I cannot imagine anything more interesting than the work of the India Office. I can assure you that it would be a great relief to my mind if you could accept.”

He went on to say that he missed Lansdowne much more than he expected. Rosebery was touched by the kind terms of this letter, but replied begging him to fill up the post at once, having no hope of ever being able to fill that or any other post. To another correspondent he wrote (August 18th) that he considered himself henceforward as a country squire of a mild type. He would be humbugged by no more cures, and was returning to England next week. As late as November he still described himself as “rather in the dumps at being so easily tired.”

Scottish affairs, public and private, absorbed his full attention during the autumn of this year. There was talk of a tunnel under the Forth, to be approached through the policies of Dalmeny, condemned by Mr. Auldrjo Jamieson, Rosebery's legal adviser, as a wild project to be firmly opposed. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, now at the Board of Trade, when privately

appealed to, thought there was no fear that the project would mature. Lord Reay, the Dutch diplomatist who had succeeded to an ancient Scottish title and had married a wealthy Scottish wife, was a regular correspondent of Rosebery's and kept him posted on party politics and on doings in Scotland. He had written at length in the summer (July 3rd and 8th) about Heriot's Hospital in Edinburgh, now the subject of parliamentary inquiry and bandied about between the Home Secretary, the President of the Council, and the Lord Advocate. This was a typical example of the eddies in which Scottish parliamentary business was made to swirl ; and more and more its reform became Rosebery's main preoccupation. At Mentmore in October he had this out with Sir William Harcourt, and found a sympathetic hearer in the Home Secretary, who enjoyed Scottish visits and Scottish sport, but did not wish to be plagued with the settlement of Scottish problems in the company of a Lord Advocate of whom he had a poor opinion. He agreed that there ought to be a distinct Scottish Department, with a full-blown Minister. At the close of the year he explained that he had written to Gladstone (December 23rd) on the basis of Rosebery's representation :

“ But the only reply was that his whole mind was full of Ireland, and that ‘ the land of brown heath and shaggy wood ’ must wait for the inhabitants of the shores of the melancholy ocean. He also told me that I had a Solicitor-General and should have a Lord Advocate soon to help me, which looked as if he thought the whole thing was a fit of laziness on my part, which is not the fact. So it is clear that we must wait for the *mollia tempora fandi*, and if we survive Ireland, we will yet do justice to Scotland. You may rely on my not letting the thing drop, as you have convinced me more than ever of its expediency.

“ Yours ever,
“ W. V. H.”

The fruit of this agreement was not long in ripening, as will be seen directly.

Rosebery was now the accredited champion of national claims. His Edinburgh friend, Professor Donaldson, wrote (October 6th) :

“ You can scarcely have an idea how strong the affection of the Scottish people for you is. In all political and very many social gatherings you are the first they think of, and when you refuse, as in many cases you must, there is genuine vexation and grief.”

This autumn witnessed his Rectorial Address at Aberdeen and his election as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, which are noticed separately. The latter was followed by the foundation of a Rosebery Club, on the model of the Glasgow Gladstone Club, at the suggestion of an intimate Edinburgh friend, Sheriff Holmes Ivory. But his sympathy was not limited to the high academic field. He liberally supported the fund for boys attending the Watt School of Art through the medium of the Edinburgh Trades Council. On the political side he presided at the Edinburgh banquet to Mr. W. P. Adam, who, as Chief Whip, had been the Carnot of the Liberal victory, and was just appointed Governor of Madras (November 2nd).

In the *Life of Gladstone* (bk. viii, ch. i) Lord Morley sets forth convincingly the elements of disruption inherent in the powerful and representative Government which met Parliament in 1880. In the spring of 1881 the prospect of Irish land legislation drove the Duke of Argyll from the office of Lord Privy Seal. Rosebery, as we have seen, had not been available for the Indian Under-Secretaryship when Lansdowne resigned it, but a fresh shuffle of the cards might now find him a fitting post. Harcourt, genuinely anxious to secure this valuable recruit, again approached Gladstone at Easter. He had been staying at the Durdans, and wrote :

“ Rosebery says he did not expect to be appointed, though that I consider is not quite an accurate view of the matter.”

He went on to explain that at any rate Rosebery was irritated and disappointed because he seemed to have expected confidences which he did not receive. Something, therefore, should be done to soothe him. This was not a happy line to advance towards Gladstone of all people. He replied curtly :

“ The notion of a title to be consulted on succession to a Cabinet office is absurd. I believe Rosebery to have a very modest estimate of himself, and trust he has not fallen into so gross an error.”

Gladstone’s choice of Chichester Fortescue, just created Lord Carlingford, for the Privy Seal was natural enough. Ireland had been placed in the first line, he was an Irishman, and had been Chief Secretary so long ago as 1865. Later in the session he took charge of the Irish Land Bill in the House of Lords and assisted its passage loyally and capably.

Such considerations, joined to Gladstone’s conservatism in the matter of official promotion, prevented Rosebery’s admission to the Cabinet at thirty-four, the age at which Canning, Peel, and Gladstone himself entered the inner circle of government. But if he had been given the Privy Seal, with the charge of Scottish business, pending the creation of a Scottish Secretaryship, a just and sensible reform would have been accelerated, while Harcourt and he having started in friendly accord, some later occasions of personal friction and misunderstanding might have been escaped. In the House of Lords early in the session he only intervened in a discussion on the administration of the Burnett bequest, a religious endowment at Aberdeen University to be regulated under the Endowed Institutions (Scotland) Act. In his capacity of Rector of the University he came into collision with the Duke of Richmond, its Chancellor, a frequent antagonist on other occasions. He spoke wittily for Lord Dunraven’s resolution in favour of opening museums and galleries on Sunday, which was lost by but seven votes in a tolerably full House.

Scotland claimed him again on the Court of Session Bill (March 22nd), when he was asked to protest against the proposal to reduce the Lords Ordinary from five to three. He asked questions on the persecution of Jews in Russia, and on the Convention between Turkey and Greece. Lord Fife, a Liberal who had lately succeeded to a seat in the House, pressed the Government to consider the appointment of a Minister for Scotland other than a law officer, on the lines of a report issued twelve years before. It was suggested that a Parliamentary Under-Secretary with a seat in the House of Commons would satisfy the Scottish demand. The Duke of Argyll thought that the Lord Advocate could only be displaced by a Cabinet Minister, and, since this was not proposed, he hoped the Government would not be in a hurry to make a change. Rosebery drew a rapid but exhaustive historical sketch of Scottish administration since the Union ; pointed out that much Scottish business was not legal ; that no Lord Advocate had been in the Cabinet, though he had to act as Minister for Scotland ; that Scottish members of the House of Commons had signed a memorial in the sense of Fife's question but had received no reply ; and, most of all,

“ the words Home Rule have begun to be distinctly and loudly mentioned in Scotland. . . . I believe that the late Lord Beaconsfield, on one occasion in Scotland, implored the people of Scotland to give up ‘ mumbling the dry bones of political economy, and munching the remainder biscuit of effete Liberalism.’ I believe the people of Scotland, at the present moment, are mumbling the dry bones of political neglect, and munching the remainder biscuit of Irish legislation.”

To his horror, *The Times* reported him as saying, “ The Government are munching, etc.,” and he wrote at once to Gladstone, explaining that the *Scotsman* had given the correct version.

Later there was a discussion on the recently delimited Greek frontier and the European Concert (June 30th). That cumbrous piece of machinery then

inspired lofty hopes which later events tended to depress. Lord Salisbury, indeed, pointed out that it was the authority of Prince Bismarck, rather than that of the Concert, which had settled this particular difficulty ; Rosebery, on the other hand, congratulated Lord Granville “ for having kept together a most splendid yet efficient instrument.” His last unofficial appearance was in a debate on the subject of Scottish Peerage claims to vote for Scottish Representative Peers, which ended in the appointment of a Select Committee with the most exiguous functions (July 8th).

University College was in the habit of holding an annual public debate, and this year Rosebery presided over a discussion on the motion that the Advance of Democracy tends to strengthen the Foundations of Society. Winding up a debate on this pompously worded thesis—a debate which had produced predictions of the abolition of the monarchy and of the House of Lords, and the institution of manhood suffrage and equal electoral districts—the Chairman summed up by assuming a position well to the Left, though not to the Extreme Left. If the House of Lords should impede the march of democracy, it would meet the fate of Stephenson’s cow. But were the forces of beneficent democracy to be employed at the moment in sweeping away a practical Second Chamber ? A Tory speaker had regarded America with disfavour. He, on the contrary, had the greatest warmth of feeling for America and the American people. “ I am one of those who think that a person who elects a very moderate intellect to carry out his transactions, and chooses him of his free will, is better off than the man who has a Leviathan set over him against his will.” On paper, the main elements of the British constitution were not congenial to democracy. No doubt the advance of democracy would largely affect the power and influence of the privileged classes. He did not regret that, because they would have no reason to exchange part of their privilege and power for the

secure enjoyment of the remainder. He confided in the good sense and practical ability of his countrymen, and therefore desired to give a large share of responsibility and power to them. Above all, responsibility.

As the months flew on, the absence from the Government of such a conspicuous figure, in no way disabled from lending a hand, became more and more noticeable. Scottish friends were puzzled, and said so. John Morley, with whom a friendship was budding,¹ and who had told him, "It would be of great use to me, as well as a great pleasure, to have a chance of knowing your ideas from time to time" (May 20th, 1880), wrote later in the same year: "I hope it is not an impertinence in me to say that I am getting rather impatient to see you among the Government magnates."

The Under-Secretaryship at the Home Office fell vacant by the elevation of Mr. Leonard Courtney. Harcourt wrote to Gladstone: "I think you know how sincerely I am anxious that Rosebery should join the Government for all reasons, and particularly on the ground of my great personal regard for him" (July 27th, 1881).

It was understood that Rosebery would have special charge of Scottish business, of course in concert with the Lord Advocate. He wrote to Gladstone (August 1st): "You are always devising some friendly plan for me, and I fear you must often have thought me crotchety with regard to them." He was afraid that the shifting of offices might cause inconvenience, but was indifferent to the possible attribution of personal motives in having urged a change in the management of Scottish business. He concluded: "I am pleased and proud to think that at last I shall serve under you." Congratulations poured in. Arthur Godley, Mr. Gladstone's trusted private secretary, was "glad you are to be Minister for

¹ The intimacy had not progressed very far, for the writer added, "Pray do not call me Professor; I am not, nor ever was, nor shall be professor of anything, not even of hairdressing or corn-cutting."

Scotland"; Edward Hamilton, also from 10 Downing Street, set him in the foremost place among his contemporaries, and hoped he would mollify the somewhat rough manner of his Secretary of State; Reay wrote he would be supreme in his sphere till promoted to the Cabinet; Sir Charles Dilke said they must congratulate *themselves*, and when he got office worthy of him, would congratulate *him*. Rosebery had written to Dalhousie an affectionate note full of compunction, having heard that his friend, who had been working at the Home Office, had bidden a melancholy farewell to Harcourt. Dalhousie replied that Rosebery was tormenting himself about nothing, for he was bound to conform to the new arrangement. He himself had only made civil regrets to Harcourt, who had been very kind to him. He felt sure that Rosebery must be out of sorts. Nevertheless, the seeds of future difficulties lurked in the arrangement.

Harcourt was anxious to secure Rosebery, but he also wanted an Under-Secretary in the Commons. This he could not have. On Rosebery's side, he found himself not only Under-Secretary at the Home Office, but in a sense subordinate to the Lord Advocate—a very different affair. Still, things worked well enough at first. The Harcourts stayed at Dalmeny on their way north, and Rosebery wrote to Mary Gladstone: "The Home Secretary, the Lord Advocate (regnant), and I have been like lambs and lions and cockatrices." And he noted later visits to Dundee Prison in the morning, and Perth Prison in the afternoon, "and so home to bed in the evening." His parliamentary duties for the session were limited to answering in a sentence a question about pawnbrokers. During the prolonged discussions in committee of the Land Law (Ireland) Bill, Rosebery regularly supported the Government in the Lobby till it passed on August 22nd. His sole intervention in debate was on a minor amendment of Lord Salisbury's, modifying in the landlords' interest the functions of the Land Court, the central pivot of the measure. "The Government,

as I understand it, considered that the Court was a necessary evil. They wished to encourage recourse to it as little as possible." This was not exactly the tone of an impassioned disciple. His abstention, however, was fortunate, for early in the month he was again in the hands of Dr. Matthews Duncan with a slight relapse of his last year's illness.

The autumn of this year kept Rosebery active in Scotland. Sir William Harcourt was made a Freeman of Glasgow, where he and Rosebery interchanged jocular compliments in scenes of unbounded enthusiasm.

Two days later (October 27th) Rosebery spoke at a great Liberal meeting in Dundee, after receiving an address from nine important Liberal associations of the surrounding counties. He declared his attachment to Liberal principles, and hoped that as age creeps on, and pulses grow colder, it would be his fate not to be a backslider in the cause. At the evening meeting, after sketching sarcastically the efforts of Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord Salisbury, he touched on the management of Scottish affairs in Parliament. It was impossible to lay down a rule that there must always be a Scottish Cabinet Minister. He himself had neither the necessary ability nor experience, and nobody else was available. The Lord Advocate was fully competent to represent Scotland in the House of Commons, and he would do his best, in spite of criticism from some of their own party, to serve Scotland with a special sense of responsibility to the whole country, though not to a single constituency.

A month later he was at Greenock, addressing a great party meeting (November 4th). After a picturesque and reasoned comparison of Tory with Liberal Foreign Policy, he devoted the rest of his speech to Ireland. At that date fully ninety per cent. of Liberals would have adopted the tone that he did. He did not believe that Home Rule would ever be granted by a British Parliament, but oppression and confiscation had affected the very basis of society in

Ireland, and Gladstone, broadly speaking, was the only man who had done anything for Ireland. How could he be the object of the bitterest malignity of Ireland ? The Government had given the Land League every chance of showing itself to be a peaceful tenants' association, and only quelled it after it had run up the black flag. Britain must continue to have patience. "We are dealing with an exceptional race, and an exceptional state of things ; but even in dealing with these we need not tremble nor falter, if we are guided by the light of justice and truth." He concluded by the belief that, though we were paying for the sins of our forefathers, unborn generations would rise up in Ireland to bless, as in reason they must, the name of their latest and greatest benefactor, the Prime Minister.

He lived to see the Government of Ireland reconstituted in a fashion which neither he nor the Prime Minister expected or desired.

At Hull he also devoted to Ireland the bulk of a long speech (December 7th). Sir Stafford Northcote and Lord George Hamilton had lately spoken, and Rosebery reiterated the argument that however partial the victory over disorder might be, and however slow the operation of Gladstone's remedies, at any rate Conservative orators had nothing to boast of, either in the past or the present. The condition of Ireland was the fruit of English misrule.

"Have we advanced an inch, have we advanced a foot, have we advanced a yard, in the last century, towards making Ireland more reconciled and more prosperous under our rule ? . . . We can but sow the seed hoping that if we ourselves are not spared, others may reap the harvest. I do maintain that it is not for the Conservatives, who have never lifted their hands to help Ireland, to hinder the Government in the task in which we are engaged."

Only two other political occurrences of the year 1881 need be recorded, each in its way a tribute to his rising reputation as a party man. In January he was

blackballed for the Travellers' Club, a non-political institution of the highest standing, and was almost tearfully assured by his sponsor, the accomplished Edward Cheyney, that the axe fell solely for political reasons. In August, when the Queen visited Edinburgh for a Volunteer review, he was sworn of the Privy Council at Holyrood. This gave him full standing in the conduct of Scottish business.

Home life passed tranquilly throughout the year, with no foreign travel to speak of. In the previous year much correspondence had taken place about the purchase of a piece of land at Knightsbridge, west of Albert Gate, on which a great house was to be built overlooking the park. The project fell through, and pending the choice of a home for themselves, the Roseberys took a lease of Lansdowne House at the end of the year. Its owner was absent from Europe as Governor-General of Canada from 1883 to 1888, and as Viceroy of India from 1888 to 1894. It was a heavy blow, he wrote, to let his house at all, but he would sooner have the Roseberys as tenants than anybody else that he knew.

The year 1882 opened propitiously with the birth of the first son. He was christened Albert Edward Harry Meyer Archibald—"names enough in all conscience," as his father noted. The godfathers were the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cleveland. During Lady Rosebery's convalescence and throughout the spring the weeks were passed in London and at the Durdans, broken only by a brief visit to Trinity, Cambridge, as Harcourt's guest, and by a couple of short flights of a day or two to Edinburgh, where Rosebery attended Sir Robert Christison's funeral, and for the first time slept at the restored Castle of Barnbougle. "It was a strange feeling re-inhabiting the disused home of one's predecessors. It was beautiful sleeping in the room over the walnut room with the outlook entirely sea." He got through some Scottish business, and opened the Fisheries Exhibition at Edinburgh with a "wretched little speech" (April 12th, 1882).

He kept himself in condition when in London by early walks in Hyde Park, a practice which he maintained for many years. It was his delight to secure a picked companion for these trudges, and to take him back to breakfast at Berkeley Square. At the Durdans he enjoyed continual rides, and in the previous winter he had started playing football with the servants. On the first day, in a frost, he "had had enough of it in half an hour," but he persevered for many more games during the cold weather.

During the session of 1882 Rosebery's parliamentary attendances were purely departmental. The important Scottish matters that emerged included the Entail (Scotland) Bill, a complicated subject with which Rosebery dealt skilfully and tactfully, in face of powerful opposition from old-fashioned Scottish landowners. Queen Victoria, sharing their standpoint, directed Sir Henry Ponsonby to write (June 19th): "The Queen laments the change of Scottish Entails." Rosebery replied that the measure was "not revolutionary"; but she wrote again (June 24th), fearing that many old properties would be alienated: "Would many people wish to convert their estates into money?" Of the Educational Endowments (Scotland) Bill, a valuable measure complementary to the English Endowed Schools Acts, something will be said later.

In English affairs it fell to Rosebery to answer a question asked by an eccentric politician, Lord Stanley of Alderley, about the recent Macclesfield election (February 10th). There had been extensive bribery, two solicitors had gone to prison for corrupt practices, and the election was declared void. In pleading for mitigation of the sentences, Lord Stanley took the most offensive tone he could, asking how much Rosebery had spent on the Midlothian election, and other Liberals on other candidatures? Rosebery's brief reply was a pattern of scornful good-humour; but his own comment was, "My first official answer,—very bad."

Soon afterwards Lord Stanhope introduced a measure regulating the hours of women and young persons in a limited class of shops. The machinery of the Bill was criticised by many who were not merciless upholders of universal freedom of contract. Even Lord Shaftesbury pointed out the risk of diminishing women's employment (February 28th), so that Rosebery, abounding in sympathy with the purpose of his noble relative, had an easy task in refusing Home Office countenance to the Bill. Lord Stanhope was more successful in winning its sympathy for a measure prohibiting the payment of wages in public-houses—a necessary reform too long delayed (May 2nd). Other topics discussed were precautions against fire in theatres, and the gates and bars obstructing, in private interests, some of the busiest thoroughfares in London. It was not until several years later that these were removed by Act of Parliament. At the very close of the session Rosebery came into collision with the masterful Chairman of Committees, Lord Redesdale, over the Scottish Fisheries Bill, and got the best of the encounter.

The social revolution in Ireland, as Mr. Gladstone called it, from the very first menaced the unity of the Government. In 1880 the House of Lords rejected the Compensation for Disturbance Bill by a vast majority, and the Government lost in Lord Lansdowne one of its most valuable juniors. The Land Act of 1881 changed the Duke of Argyll from a comrade prompt for occasions of ardent oratory into an undiscriminating critic of Government policy, while it shook the faith of many other supporters. From the opposite standpoint, the Government measure of coercion, the Protection of Life and Property (Ireland) Bill, introduced by W. E. Forster in the same session, from its suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act only secured the consent of Gladstone himself after deep searchings of heart.¹ 1882 was not old before it was clear that neither the Coercion Act nor the Land Act

¹ *Life of Gladstone*, bk. viii, ch. iv, § ii.

had pacified the country. Parnell had appeared to be irreconcilable, and to be trying to wreck the Land Act. After Gladstone's stern warning that the resources of civilisation against its enemies were not exhausted,¹ the Irish leader had been lodged in Kilmainham Gaol.¹ But the state of the country grew worse, and in April, there being some evidence that Parnell would not be inaccessible to reason, the policy was modified, chiefly through the agency of Joseph Chamberlain. Lord Cowper had resigned the Vice-royalty, and at the beginning of May the Cabinet decided to release Parnell and the two other imprisoned Members of Parliament, bringing in a new Protection of Life and Property Bill to replace that passed the year before. Forster resigned, and his place was taken by Lord Frederick Cavendish, Lord Spencer having agreed to return to the Viceregal Lodge.

Rosebery played no direct or responsible part in these events, but he was in the innermost circle, as is shown by his notes made at the time :

May 3rd.—“Talked with Frederick Cavendish about his appointment to the Chief Secretaryship, which was not yet announced. He low at leaving his place by Mr. Gladstone's side. Harcourt had been the only man he could not get on with. H. had said to him the night before : ‘You give Rosebery any money he asks because he is such a friend of Mr. Gladstone's, and you won't give me anything.’ His father and Hartington had been against his taking it ; H. because he thought F. did not speak well enough. He told me he was not to be in the Cabinet, but was doubtful how that would work. I said he would probably be put in within a few months, and that he would have been in long ago if Hartington were not there already.”

May 4th.—“Situation of affairs gloomy and desperate. I was given to understand that three suspects had given pledges but these deny them.”

Rosebery and his wife went quietly down to the Durdans, greatly disquieted.

¹ Leeds, October 8th, 1881.

May 6th.—“ Much perplexed as to my position, as to which I wrote a paper.¹ I am clear that I disagree with the policy of Govt. but am almost clear that I ought not to resign. Finally wrote to Mr. Gladstone to ask him to give me five minutes on Monday morning ; this with a view to asking him what is the exact position of a subordinate like myself with reference to Cabinet policy.”

May 7th.—“ Rode from 10.30 a.m. to 1.15. A melancholy and perplexed ride.

“ On my return at 2.15 learned the news of the assassination of poor F. Cavendish and Burke. They might have taken a more brilliant life, they could not have taken a nobler life than F. Cavendish’s.

“ Of course this event cleared my course completely. All hands are wanted at the pumps.”

He returned to London and wrote to 10 Downing Street : “ I can only say ‘ God sustain you all. It is past all words.’ ”

At the moment it was difficult to gauge precisely the political outcome of the crime. A trusted Scottish correspondent² wrote that it was difficult before Sunday to find any Liberals who heartily approved the release of the suspects. There was now a general agreement that a firm vindication of the law ought to be followed by remedial legislation on Arrears, etc. Such violent manifestations as that of a Trades-Unionist who advocated martial law for Ireland could only be transient. But Rosebery’s depression of spirits continued. Another frequent Edinburgh correspondent, Charles Cooper of the *Scotsman* (May 14th), combated his pessimistic outlook, and maintained that the tragedy of May 6th had in effect cleared the political air. But it was an anxious time. When Mr. Gladstone stayed at the Durdans late in May, Scotland Yard, through Lewis Harcourt, begged Rosebery not to let his guest walk in the grounds after dusk, though it was difficult to conceive danger in that quiet corner.

Scotland was still dissatisfied with the arrangement

¹ This does not exist.

² James Patten, May 10th.

whereby her popular hero remained an Under-Secretary, in charge of her business, but meanly ranked in the official hierarchy. Cooper wrote from the *Scotsman* that he meant again to push "the Privy Seal view," of which several Scottish members had written their approval, a sentiment also held generally throughout Scotland. Other Scottish friends sent letters at the same time in a similar sense, begging that he would not refuse a seat in the Cabinet were it offered.

Throughout the year Rosebery had tried to keep the Prime Minister abreast of Scottish business, and to make him realise its relative importance. In the spring he wrote at length about Scottish judges and their salaries, and, a little later, begged that the vacant Junior Lordship of the Treasury should be conferred on a Scottish member (May 18th, 1882).

"Though I do not pretend in any sense to represent Scotland or to assert that Scotland will be seriously outraged if you do not appoint a Scottish Lord of the Treasury, yet I would venture to remind you that 'many a little makes a mickle,' that Scotland is the backbone of the Liberal party, and that, if I am rightly informed, there is some discontent as to her treatment. If this discontent, instead of being floating and partial, should become consistent and general, one article in the indictment would certainly be the missing of this obvious and easy opportunity of supplying that omission of a Scottish Lord of the Treasury which was the subject of complaint on the formation of this Government."

The reply was to the effect that there was only one vacancy, and that it was reasonably asked that it should be filled from below the gangway. This was the sole impediment. Rosebery replied at once (May 18th) :

"DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I am obliged by your note, and beg to express my regret for having interfered in the matter."

On this the Prime Minister minuted : “ Assure him that his interference was quite right, and such as I desire and am thankful for.”

The Scottish Entail Bill was in danger of delay. It was unpopular with some landlords. Rosebery, however, warned the Private Secretary at 10 Downing Street of the Scottish discontent at the slow progress of the measure, with good effect. But a more serious situation arose over the Scottish Endowments Bill. It is nakedly set out in the following letter :

HOME DEPARTMENT, *June 27th, 1882.*

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ I am sorry to trouble you in the midst of your labours with a letter. I would not do so did I not think the matter one of the greatest importance both to Scotland and the administration of Scottish affairs by the present Government. Moreover your statement on Tuesday and Mr. Duncan McLaren’s letter appear to make it opportune.

“ I do not think from what you said on Tuesday that you are aware of the almost vital necessity of passing the Scottish Endowments Bill this session. I say ‘almost vital,’ which is a strong expression, with reference to Scotland and the position of the Government there. The Endowments Bill has been introduced three times by this Government. It has received the general support of the Scottish members, and, if I might employ a much abused term, of the intelligent people of Scotland. As a measure, no impartial person will, I think, deny its merits. But were it the worst measure ever brought in, its position as regards the Government would be very much the same. Three times in three successive sessions has the Government introduced the Bill to Parliament. By a combination of what I fear our enemies would term indifference on the part of the Government, and very unscrupulous lobbying on the part of a small and corrupt clique which opposes it, it has twice been allowed to lapse. It is now for the third time in danger. The clique I allude to already boasts that it has again beaten the Government and that the Bill will again be allowed to drop. That means that the recess will again be passed in intrigue and wirepulling in Edinburgh, in renewed vapourings over the defeat of the Government, in unscrupulous charges against all connected with the Government or the Bill, in reiterated complaints as

to the neglect of Scottish business and the impotence of Scottish administration. What are indeed the facts as they appear to the most impartial eye ? The Prime Minister was returned by a Scottish constituency, backed by an overwhelming majority of Scottish members. From the day of the first meeting of the new Parliament until the present day of its third session, if I am correctly informed, not one minute of Government time has been allotted to Scotland or Scottish affairs. Can you be surprised that the people of Scotland complain ? Of course the first persons to bear the brunt of this are the Lord Advocate and myself. We are not conscious of deserving blame ; in and out of the session we have done all we could. But I do not see what more we can do, and our reward, more especially mine, will be to return to Scotland to be taunted with our incapacity to get any attention paid to Scotland. More especially mine, because my appointment was supposed to indicate that greater attention would be paid to Scottish business, whereas it indicates nothing of the sort.

“ Were it not for this, you might well ask what business it is of mine : the Bill is not in the Home Office, and it is for Mundella to speak. But unfortunately the view is taken in Scotland that I have a considerable share in the responsibility ; and certainly wherever the Scottish halfpence may go, I shall get the Scottish kicks.

“ That is an eventuality which I am not prepared to face, when I am of opinion that the aggressive boot contains a toe of justice. I literally do not know how Scotland is to be faced during the recess if this Bill be not passed : and as we all hope that you are coming to Scotland we trust that it may not be under any imputation of neglect of Scottish affairs. And apart from all, I repeat as regards the special evil which this Bill removes that it corrupts the very foundation and source of public life in Edinburgh.

“ Believe me, dear Mr. Gladstone,

“ Yrs. always,

“ (Signed) A. ROSEBERY.

“ P.S.—I think it right to add that so far as we know there are not eight out of all the Scots members who even profess to oppose any part of the Bill.”

Mr. Gladstone replied with the suggestion that the Bill should go upstairs to a Grand Committee, then a

novel method of accelerating the march of important measures of special interest to a section of the House. Rosebery pointed out the objections to this course :

HOME DEPARTMENT, *June 28th, 1882.*

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ With reference to your note of to-day I have to express a hope that you may soon see your way to giving a day for the second reading of the Scottish Endowments Bill even though you cannot do so at present.

“ As regards the project of a Grand Committee I have to observe :

“ Firstly, if the Grand Committee be a formal and parliamentary one, the reference will not be allowed without a debate on procedure which would take longer than to pass the Endowments Bill in the regular way.

“ Secondly, if it were not a formal one, it would not really advance the Bill and would in any case have to be preceded by a discussion on the second reading : while the treating of a Scottish Bill in an exceptional manner would certainly be unpopular in Scotland.

“ Thirdly, this Bill is the least fitted of our Scottish Bills for such a method, as there is little difference in detail to be thrashed out, but a fixed determination by the Heriot ring to obstruct, so that the Grand Committee would only be an additional stage for the Bill.

“ Fourthly, such a reference would be used by the opponents of the Bill to prove that the Bill was treated in a ‘ hole and corner manner ’—a favourite phrase of theirs. On the other hand a public discussion would betray the utter weakness of the opposition in fair and open field.

“ In fine I venture to think that this Bill would not be a good *corpus vile* for the experiment of a Grand Committee whether it be regular or informal.

“ Believe me,

“ Yr. affy.,

“ AR.”

The climax came in December, after a conversation in which the Prime Minister, always personally affectionate and appreciative, but immersed in Irish and foreign troubles, did not recognise the urgency of meeting the claims of Scotland, or those of Rosebery

himself. It may be easy to comprehend the reasons which caused delay, but not the absence of explanation by one who could explain anything. Rosebery felt it necessary to make himself clear on paper. He wrote on December 6th and, more categorically, on December 10th and 16th :

Confidential.

HOME DEPARTMENT, *December 6th, 1882.*

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ While I am sincerely obliged to you for your frank intimation of yesterday, it places me in a position of extreme gravity, personally and officially.

“ I need hardly say that I should never have connected myself with what I must regard as a very imperfect system of managing Scottish affairs, or indeed have surrendered my liberty at all, had it not been for the paragraph in your letter offering me the appointment :

“ ‘ I do not think that the arrangement would last very long in its present form. There *must* be within the next six months further manipulation of political affairs : and with this there is the likelihood of development uncertain as to time, but certain, and so more than a likelihood except as to that element.’

“ Your explanation of yesterday so completely removes the meaning I had attached to this sentence that I am compelled to view the situation altogether in a new light.

“ Family reasons oblige me to hurry to Scotland to-night. If I am able to leave my wife I will ask you to grant me an interview on your return : if not, I must write what I have to say. But I hope I may consider myself at liberty to consult (in strict confidence and without mentioning any names but yours and mine) one or two of my principal supporters in Scotland, and to ask that permission is the main object of this note.

“ Believe me,

“ Yr. affy.,

“ AR.”

Confidential. DALMENY PARK, EDINBURGH, *December 10th, 1882.*

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ Many thanks for your kind letter.

“ I have no difficulty in explaining what I meant. I understood your communication on Tuesday to consist of two

parts : one was that only Lord Derby and Sir C. Dilke would at present be admitted to the Cabinet ; and secondly, that, though an arrangement might be made about Easter to fill up the Presidency of the Council, which has now been in commission for many months, that claims of seniority, with regard to which you mentioned a name, would have to be considered.

“ Under these circumstances, I felt that my appointment, which I had understood from your letter of July 31, 1882, would only be a temporary one, would assume a very different aspect. I have never considered that the responsibility for Scottish administration should rest with the Under-Secretary for the Home Department. On two occasions last summer I ventured to point out to you that the arrangement could not last, and I understood that you assented. The experiment was always believed by me to be purely tentative, but in my humble opinion it was open to the reproach of being both undefined and undignified. But I believed that it was intended to mark a new departure, to be a step in the right direction, and to contain the germ of a new office which would satisfy the country. I gathered, however, on Tuesday that it was your intention to enter upon the next session of Parliament with this system of administration unaltered.

“ That intention, I confess, I found it difficult to reconcile with the passage of your letter which I quoted, and raised a question to me of much gravity with reference to public affairs in Scotland.

“ The personal question is a minor one. If a somewhat Chinese principle of seniority is to prevail in promotion, it will be many years before I cease, except by my own act or a party defect, to be an Under-Secretary. I am almost, if not quite, the junior member of the Government. In merit I have no doubt that my inferiority would be equally undoubted. If I could ever hope to rise higher, it could only be by the favour and support of my fellow-countrymen. But if seniority is to be reckoned against me, that, and the probable succession of one, as well as the probable elevation of other ministers to the House of Lords, would keep me for ever in a subordinate position.

“ I do not value office at all. It is a sacrifice of much that renders life pleasant to me, leisure, and independence, and the life of the country. But, unattractive as it is, your remarks appeared to me to open a gloomier vista still : and if the result of all this should be my retirement into private

life, I should have nothing personal to regret, while I should feel that I could be of more use both to Scotland and yourself as an independent member than in my present position.

“ I am sincerely sorry to trouble you with all these trivial and tiresome details. But if you knew how I hate writing them you would pity rather than blame.

“ Believe me,

“ Yr. affy.,

“ AR.”

Confidential. DALMENY PARK, EDINBURGH, December 16th, 1882.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ My domestic anxieties have prevented my answering your letter before this, and I fear they will equally prevent my going to you at present. I should be glad to rest on the constant kindness of your expressions, were it not that this very kindness makes it necessary for me to clear up the position so far as I am concerned. You are so strong that you can afford to disregard any claim or interest you please. I, on the other hand, am obliged to keep in view the one interest of the nation which I serve and which made me what little I am. I cannot, therefore, honestly remain, if I wished it, a party to an arrangement which I think derogatory to the national position and injurious to the national interests. That you have been too busy to attend to Scottish business arrangements I can readily believe. But that is exactly where the mischief lies. No minister of importance has the time to look after Scottish matters, and so they have to be dealt with by subordinates who are not of importance, an arrangement which I know to be—as I have already said—derogatory and injurious. Large changes are now being made which it is found possible to consider, but as usual the question regarding Scotland is the one which must be shelved or adjourned.

“ I never thought to find myself engaged in an argument with you on what may appear to be a question of my personal advancement. I can only hope that you know me well enough to understand and believe that this is not the case. I serve a country which is the backbone of our party, but which is never recognised.

“ I, and those whom I have consulted, feel that it is necessary now to make a stand on its behalf, and that is why I am obliged to take up the present position. But let me add that if you can see your way to developing an arrange-

ment for Scottish business and putting some one else at the head of it (and there are several persons eminently fitted for it) I will gladly serve in any subordinate post you may choose.

“ As to ‘ patience and faith,’ I have perhaps exercised more of both than you imagine : while the best proof I can give of the little regard that I have to my own interests and happiness in taking my present course is the risk I run of forfeiting your affection and esteem : the more so as I know that in any case all this can but end disagreeably and painfully so far as I am concerned : and indeed political life can never be the same again to me.

“ Y. affy.,
“ AR.”

Scotland and he himself had been lightly treated, he felt, and he did not scruple to say so, even to his revered chief. The Prime Minister’s notes in reply continued affectionate but vague. Mrs. Gladstone also wrote, and elicited this answer :

DALMENY PARK, December 15th, 1882.

“ MY DEAR MRS. GLADSTONE,

“ I was greatly touched by your kind and affectionate letter, which was just like yourself, and I cannot praise it more.

“ However, I know you will forgive me if I cannot write more about this business, which is absolutely nauseous to me from every point of view. As regards politics and office, I do not think I shall ever get the taste of it out of my mouth.

“ Yours ever,
“ AR.”

Meanwhile, throughout the autumn, Scottish business had been absorbing, and Rosebery, except for a brief sojourn abroad, had been immersed in it at Dalmeny. The case of the *Scotsman* sharply criticising the Government, on which Harcourt wrote furiously to Rosebery that the newspaper was malicious and malignant, and trying to do all the harm it could to the Government, as, for instance, by suppressing a generous speech made by Lochiel as spokesman of the landowners. Rosebery drove into Edinburgh to remonstrate with

his friend Cooper, the editor. He was very busy, and Lord Dalhousie wrote (November 24th) : "How you find time for all the work you get through is marvellous to me."

There had been an idea that Gladstone would visit his constituents in the autumn, but the engagement to Dalmeny was deferred until some date in January. Early in the New Year it was abandoned for a time under doctor's orders. Meanwhile, Edward Hamilton had consulted Rosebery on the merits of postponement until Easter at any rate, as there could be no immediate Cabinet reconstruction, and no provision for a revised Scottish administration was therefore possible. It would be awkward for Mr. Gladstone to appear in Edinburgh with nothing done, or even announced.

Egyptian affairs, with which Rosebery had no direct concern, had been the second main preoccupation of the Government. The collapse of the dual control by England and France at Cairo, the military rebellion under Arabi, the massacre of Europeans in Alexandria, and the consequent bombardment of the forts by the British fleet (July 11th), followed in rapid succession. The last development cost Gladstone the co-operation of John Bright. For some days his resignation seemed doubtful, and between the 12th and the 15th of the month Rosebery received notes from 10 Downing Street that "things are looking very bad" or that "there is a gleam of hope." On July 13th he notes :

"Marlborough House breakfast.¹ Had a talk with Bright. He said Dizzy had never done anything worse than, or so bad as, this bombardment. I excused it. He said, 'Say no more about it, it's damnable!'"

Two days later, when the resignation was announced, he met Bright again at Lady Aberdeen's.

"Had a talk with Bright. He said all the Government had lost our heads : Gladstone had not, but he had a flexible

¹ This old term for an afternoon garden-party was still in use.

conscience : meaning that he was not unscrupulous but that his conscience followed the bent of his mind. I regretted his resignation (1) because the peace party would have less confidence in the Government, (2) because it might precipitate Mr. Gladstone's own retirement. He thought the latter very likely."

On the 17th, at the Opera, the Prince of Wales sent for Rosebery to talk about Egypt.

" He wishes his views transmitted to Mr. Gladstone. His views are comprised in the wish to see the Khedive declared an independent sovereign. He told me that the Khedive was the only one of Ismail's sons who was brought up entirely in Egypt, and he is the only one who is worth anything."

Very early in June the health of old Lady Rosebery began to cause anxiety. She was now bedridden. Her grandson paid many visits when she was able to see anybody.

" When I went she thanked me in the dear old formula again for coming, ' So good of you to come, dear Archie.' "

The end came on August 19th :

" She who had loved me longest and whom I loved tenderly would no more be the centre and point of contact of so many different persons whose only link was their affection for her."

The letters that he received, including many from Hannah Rosebery's relations, showed the impression made on a younger generation by the gentle, dignified old lady. She had not been laid in the grave before her grandson had to face another shock. He was riding to Leatherhead Downs when the groom with him, a great favourite, was bolted with, his horse charging an iron gate and giving him a ghastly fall. He was dead before he could be got to the nearest house.

" I had left home at 10. It was 11.20 when I returned, and what an abyss of horror between the two dates."

He had to start for Edinburgh the same night for his grandmother's burial. After the ceremony he caught the train to London, and the next day attended the inquest on Dick, the groom, and his funeral, returning to Edinburgh the same night. A fortnight later he and his wife started for Naples, pausing at Lucerne, where he thought Thorwaldsen's Lion memorial to the Swiss Guard "surely one of the noblest monuments in the world," and at Milan. They reached Naples on September 17th, and Rosebery, as cicerone of his best-loved spot in the land of olive, aloe, and maize and vine, must have felt, as the poet of "The Daisy" did, all the pleasure of happy understanding with a beloved companion. There was a great deal of rain, and at least one sirocco, but these did not prevent a great deal of joint sightseeing. At the Palace at Capodimonte :

"I had forgotten the portrait of the Duc de Reichstadt as an Austrian Grenadier,¹ which I suppose was painted for the Bourbons to gloat over. They should have had a pendant painted of Louis XVII as a cobbler."

Here, surely, spoke the ardent Bonapartist.

The miracle of St. Januarius "was duly performed in an hour and forty minutes." But the call of Naples was irresistible. On the morning of departure :

"We drove to the dear Villa Delahante which looked sublime. I long for it and dread it. Without resolution it would be a Capua. With a heavy heart left Naples by the 3.47" (September 27th).

The greater part of the autumn was spent at Dalmeny. Regular attendance at the office in Edinburgh, some desultory shooting, the entertainment of many Scottish neighbours and of a few friends from the South, including a long visit from Sam Ward, brought the year to its close. Little or no progress

¹ A copy of this picture was made for him.

had been made with plans for the rearrangement of Scottish business and with the recognition of its importance. Rosebery continued to make it clear that he could not long remain in his anomalous position of Under-Secretary in Downing Street. Scotland would no longer be content with such a wraith of a Scottish Secretary. During a flying visit to London (December 4th), amid the strains of *Iolanthe* at the Savoy Theatre, Gladstone told him that the larger Government changes had been postponed, and that only Derby and Dilke would be admitted to the Cabinet. The next day the Prime Minister supplemented this information by saying that there might be rearrangement of the Presidency of the Council about Easter. There was also some vague talk about Gladstone's "probable retirement" (which was in the meantime deferred till Easter).

At Christmas the atmosphere was unexpectedly cleared by letters from the Prime Minister himself, and from Harcourt and Dilke, holding out more hopeful prospects.

The year 1882 had been an eventful one for Rosebery. It had witnessed the birth of his two boys, in January and December, and with them the advent of hopes which after years were to fulfil abundantly. But it brought private sorrows as well, and the prospects of public life were without comfort. These must have been in his mind when he finished his diary with the words : "Goodbye, thou damnable year."

Rosebery hoped that the mists surrounding Scottish business might evaporate with the new year, and in this spirit he journeyed to Hawarden on January 4th. He was welcomed there as always ; but the mists did not roll away of themselves, and his reserve kept him silent.

January 5th, 1883.—"Lady F. Cavendish here, beautifully calm and simple. After breakfast Mr. Gladstone put on a little Inverness cape and a straw hat, and invited me to walk round and round the square garden. Talked much of his health, excellent except in one point, that the night's sleep,

eight hours or so, which is what keeps his brain and nervous energy going, he cannot depend on. Much discourse on this. He generally has neuralgia at the end of a session, and pays for his work in that way. He spoke of his troubles. 'The Queen alone,' he said fiercely, 'is enough to kill any man.' I could not help laughing at his manner, but he said, 'This is no laughing matter, though it may sound so,' and proceeded with all their mutual troubles—Derby, Dilke, the Archbishop, the Duchess of Roxburghe and the Robes. In the midst of this he saw that the dog had been making a hole in the flower-bed, and became fierce at once, pursuing him, and throwing the stick he had been shaking at him, in doing which he dropped his hat. He then picked up hat and stick and resumed discourse. He soon got tired however. We had another walk in the afternoon together,—talk of indifferent subjects. He is reading *The Antiquary* to rest his mind."

January 6th.—"Mr. Gladstone had not realised that I was going early so he took me off at once after breakfast. He had only slept two hours, and Mrs. Gladstone was expecting Andrew Clark.

"At 10.50 took my departure, not a syllable having been said about the subject of our previous correspondence and the object of my visit! Arrived about 3.15 in London. To Harcourt, with whom a long talk."

Hannah Rosebery, however, gleaned a store of knowledge during January. On the 12th of that month Mrs. Gladstone passed through Edinburgh, and the two wives engaged in a fencing-match, of which the younger left a record in eight closely written pages of her journal. Mrs. Gladstone first touched on the political gossip of the moment—the Prime Minister's difficulties with the Queen, how he often had to write two letters a day to appease her, and how even Lord Beaconsfield had said she was very difficult to manage; the troubles caused by Sir Charles Dilke's republican opinions; by the vacant post of Mistress of the Robes; and by the Arch-bishopric of Canterbury. Lady Rosebery defended Sir William Harcourt against the criticisms of Mrs. Gladstone, who "seems strongly to dislike him." It was only at the last moment that they got on to the

subject near to Lady Rosebery's heart. A cynic might smile at her tale, but there is something touching in the cross-purposes that it describes. The elder woman, entirely absorbed in her famous husband, investing him with a more than papal infallibility, regarding all other Liberal public men as his satellites, and Rosebery in particular as a brilliant and charming youth who must bide the time fixed by superior wisdom—the younger adoring wife, conscious of her husband's supreme ability, of his intense sensitiveness, and of his keen desire for a career of public usefulness—how were these two to understand each other? Mrs. Gladstone kept on repeating, "It is all right now," adding, "He must not be in a hurry to mount the ladder, he is very young." "It is Scottish business, not himself, that he is anxious about," replied the other. "Oh, that will be all right and will be seen to," said Mrs. Gladstone, "in a careless manner." But her young friend persistently harped upon Scottish business and on the anxiety felt in Scotland concerning it. If that were only properly dealt with, Rosebery would be only too pleased to resign.

"'No,' said Mrs. Gladstone, 'four months ago he told Lord Granville that politics was the only thing in the world he cared for.' I said, 'Yes, then politics seemed different.' She said, 'Oh no, he could not give them up, it would be such a pity, a wasted life,' I said, 'I am right though.' She said, 'To do nothing but the Turf?' I kept my temper and replied, 'There is nothing of the Turf.' She said, 'It will be all right.' I said, 'He knows best.' She said, 'He is so young.' I said, 'Not of head or heart, he knows what is right.' She went downstairs, and I had no need, thank God, to kiss and shake hands. . . . The remark of Lord Granville's is not correct, Archie says."

The circumstances of the moment made inevitable the clash of these two warm hearts and loyal natures. It happened that a week or so later Hannah Rosebery came in for a more satisfactory interchange. On her

journey from Scotland to Mentmore she described Hartington at Preston and invited him to her carriage. Three hours of talk followed. He had heard of Rosebery's wish to resign, "but then we all wish to." She replied that this was really serious. Hartington had told Harcourt, he said, that Rosebery ought to have the Privy Seal with Scottish affairs, but Gladstone wanted that office for Agriculture and Commerce. "Gladstone," he went on, "is very strange and old-fashioned in some ways, and in other ways radical : he takes Sir Robert Peel as his model, and talks of seniority and previous claims."

When the Government was formed Rosebery had been spoken of for the Cabinet, and Hartington could not understand how the present situation had arisen. Lady Rosebery proceeded to tell him of her husband's abortive visit to Hawarden and her own "irritating conversation" with Mrs. Gladstone. The sound sense that kept her from being entirely blinded by wifely devotion must have made her glad to lay her woes before a listener of absolute fairness, a staunch friend, and one who hated exaggeration and could not comprehend sentiment.

At headquarters nothing occurred to change Rosebery's determination. When Parliament was meeting and Harcourt telegraphed to ask what Scots measures were ready, Rosebery in reply, after giving the required information, stated that, after a recent correspondence with Mr. Gladstone, he did not conceive that he had any special connection with Scottish business. But Lord Granville, the next day, spent three-quarters of an hour of comment on this note. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, whose nights had got worse instead of better, had started off for the South of France, all letters being kept from him, so that no new development could be anticipated from that quarter. Scottish correspondents kept on inquiring when a Minister for Scotland would be nominated. The ordinary business of the Home Office was steadily carried on, including inspections of prisons. In the

House of Lords the Bill forbidding the Payment of Wages in Public-houses received its second reading by a large majority (March 6th), but the House agreed with the Home Office in refusing to sanction the Performance of Stage Plays for Charitable Objects, without a licence (April 19th). Rosebery was also responsible for the early stages of the Criminal Law Amendment Act for the better protection of young girls "and almost old women," as he noted. This measure became law after he had resigned his office.

Friendly and hospitable converse with the Gladstones continued, and they were fellow-guests at Sandringham in March. At the end of this month he fulfilled an engagement to speak at Birmingham as the guest of Joseph Chamberlain. Lord Salisbury had spoken just before, and Rosebery's host had written, "I hope you will make mincemeat of him." But a terrible contretemps occurred, of the sort that most public speakers have experienced once, but not more than once.

"To Birmingham by 1.30 train. Meant to put speech together in train, and found *en voyage* that I had left all my notes and materials behind. I never was in such a cold sweat. Arrived at Chamberlain's at 5. Large dinner to be at 5.30. Dismay of C. In despair I knocked some notes together, and recalled some of my meditations. Sat between Miss Chamberlain and Wiggin, M.P. at dinner. Afterwards with butler to station to meet notes, which arrived ten minutes before meeting,—too late.

"Great meeting. Spoke very indifferently, but not an utter breakdown."

The speech as reported does not warrant such a note of depreciation. A little earlier Rosebery, at Glasgow, had paid an eloquent tribute to Mr. Bright, on whom the Freedom of the City was conferred. He had recalled the sympathy and affection of his fellow-countrymen for the great member for Birmingham, resting not so much on his unattainable eloquence as

on the brilliant transparency of his character. He had recalled the battle for cheap bread for the people, and Bright's immortal protest against the Crimean War. He had touched with tactful reticence on Bright's resignation from the Government on the Egyptian Question. "It was a disappointment to many who had hoped like myself that Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone hand in hand would finish their course of fire and of usefulness together." It was a fine little speech, greatly applauded, but here in Birmingham it was an easier task still to defend Mr. Bright from the sarcasms which Lord Salisbury had scattered on his head as upon those of all other leading Liberals. A considerable part of the speech was devoted to Ireland, for which the Prime Minister had striven "with more than human earnestness in a case where success was doubtful and triumph impossible." It was true that Ireland might be more agitated under a Liberal than under a Conservative administration, but for the reason that from the Liberals they also had learned to expect something, and from the Tories they knew they had nothing to expect except a Coercion Bill. Rosebery proceeded with a cutting attack on the Conservative party on their lack of any coherent policy at home, their dangerous activity abroad, and their unwearied policy of vituperation. To judge from the laughter and applause with which the report of the speech was punctuated, the speech was one of Rosebery's complete platform successes, and well deserved the expression of thanks from Chamberlain for the "able, pointed, and interesting speech to which we have just listened."

In May a change seemed to be impending.

May 5th.—"A note from Harcourt to say Cabinet had decided to bring in Bill to provide Minister for Scotland. He said to me after the Academy Dinner : 'Well, you ought to be greatly flattered : the Cabinet agreed to-day to do a thing they do not care about doing, simply to please you. I agreed that reference to a Committee was impossible, indeed only Gladstone and Granville were at all for that.' "

At the Banquet he sat by Lord Shaftesbury, who told him that all the great speakers had prepared immensely, Canning especially.

“ ‘ How about Pitt ? ’ I asked. He said Pitt reserved himself entirely for the House of Commons struggle, and did no business.”

The political atmosphere remained cloudy.

“ Dilke told me that matters are coming to a crisis in the Cabinet between the party that wants to do something and G.’s inactivity. Things will probably come to a head in the first two Cabinets after Whitsuntide.”

Rosebery discussed his position with Hartington, and on the same day (May 29th) talked with Dilke and with Harcourt at the Queen’s Ball. Two days later a debate in the House of Commons put a match to the bonfire. In a debate on the Civil Services Estimates strong exception was taken to the arrangement whereby the Under-Secretary to the Local Government Board took charge of Home Office business in the absence of the Home Secretary. It was contrary to Liberal tradition that the Under-Secretary for the Home Department should be a Peer. Harcourt, in defence, said the work of the Home Office had increased five times in twenty years : it was “ inadequately represented, not only in the House of Lords, but also in the House of Commons.” The present arrangement was not meant to be permanent : it was made to meet the exigencies of the Scottish members. Sir Richard Cross asserted the absolute necessity of an Under-Secretary to the Home Office in the House of Commons. Rosebery had to go to Edinburgh for a couple of nights, but on his return told Hartington of his letter of resignation to Mr. Gladstone.

June 4th.—“ To H.O. as usual. Had a note from Hartington to say that he had been summoned by Mr. Gladstone to confer on my resignation. At 4 had another note from him to

say Mr. G. wished him to see me before I finally settled. I saw H. at the House. He said he supposed it was of no use asking me to stay. Mr. G. wished for two stipulations : (1) that the separation should be amicable and so represented by me, especially in Scotland. I replied that that quite fell in with my ideas. (2) That I should declare that this was no obstacle to my returning to the Government next week if possible. I agreed, but said that of course I should judge of any particular proposal on its own merits. He said that Mr. G.'s view was that the future Minister for Scotland might or might not be in the Cabinet, as it suited."

June 5th.—“Mr. G. wished to see me, so I saw him for two minutes (Mrs. G. in the room). Nothing of importance passed, but his manner was very cordial and he said : ‘God bless you’ with great warmth when we parted.”

Rosebery retreated to Ascot for the week, but the Home Office had not done with him. On the Tuesday afternoon a messenger arrived from Harcourt, followed by three others on Wednesday. The Home Secretary had been pardonably excited by an article in the *Standard* imputing Rosebery's resignation to his language and temper. The result was an arranged question in the House of Commons, to which Harcourt replied that there was not a word of foundation for the statement that Rosebery had taken amiss something he had said or done.

“As to the relations between Lord Rosebery and myself, they have been for many years, and, I am happy to say, are still those of closest political friendship and personal affection which has never been disturbed for a single moment. . . . Lord Rosebery wrote to me this morning : ‘I know what you must be feeling under so undeserved an innuendo, but I am quite as indignant as you are.’”

On the same day Gladstone promised the Bill for the conduct of Scottish business for an early date.

Rosebery was now a free man, and meant to remain so as long as he could. The London season was a gay one, and there was much entertaining at Lansdowne House. Sam Ward and W. H. Hurlbert were both

frequent guests. Friendship with the Gladstones was unimpaired, and the Prime Minister passed a Sunday at the Durdans, where there was "much talk of Chamberlain's late indiscretion." At the end of July Rosebery received the offer of the Scottish Office if the Bill should pass. He declined :

[*Copy.*]

Private.

HOUSE OF LORDS, *July 30th, 1883.*

" MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

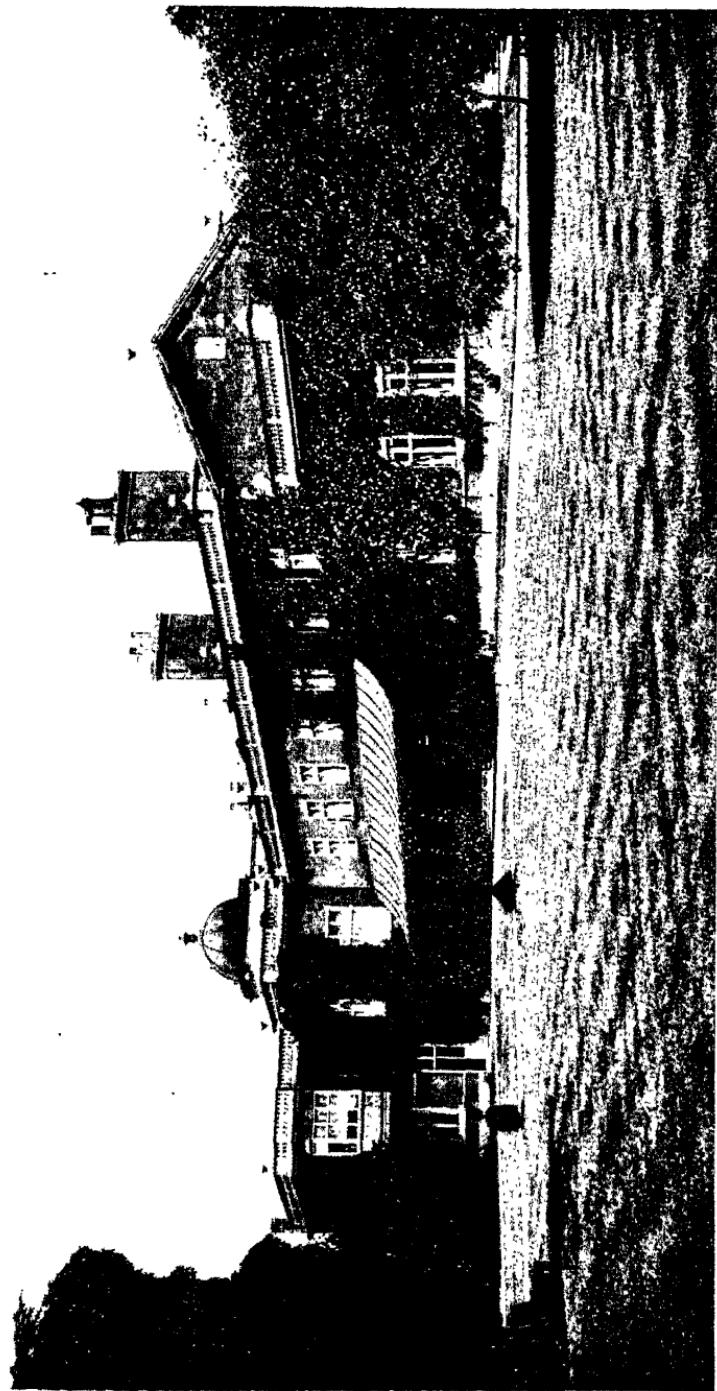
" I have just returned from Chevening and found your very kind letter, for which many thanks. But it is just because this is an 'unencumbered interval' in my life that I wish to go to Australia. I am still young, my children are still younger, and each year will diminish my opportunities.

" I will not profess to have put aside the possibility of the Scottish Ministership being offered me. But I have weighed the matter carefully, and have come to a distinct conclusion. Before I mention that conclusion, however, let me thank you cordially for your offer, and the terms in which it is conveyed.

" In the first place I have been so much the advocate for the office being formed that, if I should accept it, I am open to the accusation, which has been freely urged in the candid press, of having pressed for it in order that I might fill it myself. I do not indeed attach much weight to the character of such imputations. But if I had felt myself free to take it, I should not have spoken at Edinburgh as I did. I there put on record my view of the necessity for a minister in terms which I could not have used had I not thought myself precluded from taking it : and it has for some little time been my intention if I made that speech to also make my tour. I am not conscious of any unworthy motive in advocating a Scottish office.

" But suppose I urged in Parliament that there should be another railway commissioner or another land commissioner, and, having convinced Parliament and the Government, became myself that commissioner, I should give people the right to say things which they have no right or power to say now.

" There are other minor considerations which I need not intrude upon you now. They are swallowed up in two greater ones. One of these is that in my opinion the first Scottish Minister, in justice to Scotland, the Lord Advocate and him-



THE DURDANS.

self, should be a Cabinet minister. At any rate I have always been clear that I could not be an efficient minister for Scotland without a direct voice in the Cabinet. The other is personal, and it is this: that I have made up my mind never to re-enter the Government except as a member of the Cabinet. I can quite understand that you will think this very presumptuous on my part. But the fact is that for office, quâ office, I do not greatly care. I am convinced that for me there is no middle term of usefulness between that of absolute independence and Cabinet office. As absolutely independent I hold a position in Scotland, of which I do not think so highly as some others may, but one which I greatly cherish. As a Cabinet minister I should hold a position in Great Britain which it is an honour to covet. But by accepting office outside the Cabinet I lose both positions. On that point I have some experience to guide me.

“ I hope I have made myself clear. I value my independence and its advantages much, and perhaps too much, but at any rate so much that I will never surrender it again except for the position which ought to be preferable even to independence such as mine: nor should I surrender it then with indecent alacrity.

“ Now I know your views on this point, and it is for that reason that I consider the next six or eight months as an ‘unencumbered interval’: and indeed as regards office I regard the rest of my life in much the same light.

“ I am, therefore, about to fulfil a long cherished purpose, and I feel that I can do it without any sacrifice of private duty or public advantage.

“ With renewed thanks, believe me,

“ Y. affy.,
“ AR.”

He was troubled by scruples similar to those which had made him refuse any office three years earlier, but equally he did not hesitate in estimating his own capacity for public service in the light of his recent experience as an Under-Secretary. On the same day “ Harcourt came to luncheon—very cross.” On August 15th the Gladstones dined, and he was again pressed to take the Scottish office. Three days later he had a long talk with Harcourt on the subject. Gladstone made a last effort on the 20th, and Rosebery

definitely declined. On the following day the Local Government Board (Scotland) Bill came up for second reading in the House of Lords after a rather lively passage through the House of Commons, when Rosebery's name was freely canvassed. It was a very pusillanimous measure, but was strong enough to frighten Lord Salisbury and the Conservative Peers. Rosebery wound up the debate, saying that he would not reply to aspersions made on him in the House of Commons, because those flowers of rhetoric betrayed by their flavour and their fragrance the soil from which they sprang. He pointed out that though the measure came late to the House it contained only six clauses, the outcome of discussion on every platform in Scotland and in every newspaper in Scotland, which showed that it was the desire of Scotland that it should pass. All was of no avail. The Bill was rejected by a majority of fifteen in a House of seventy-seven members. This was Rosebery's sole appearance in this session of Parliament after his resignation.

In the early summer he became a Trustee of the British Museum, to Gladstone's great delight, but he hesitated for some time before accepting the post, in spite of Edward Hamilton's insistence. He may have thought acceptance hardly consistent with his discontent at Gladstone's attitude towards Scottish political affairs. Lord Reay wrote with great candour that he would commit a great folly if he refused this real distinction, and that the notion would be strengthened that he was too sensitive for the wear and tear of public life, while suspicion of Mr. Gladstone's motives in making the offer, as a sop in place of office, would be equivalent to a break-up of his and Rosebery's confidential relations. Nobody in Scotland would be grateful for the refusal. These and similar appeals carried the day.

CHAPTER VII

WORLD TOUR AND POLITICS, 1883-1885

AFTER Rosebery's two short visits to Dalmeny in August and explanations with his Scottish supporters, and after a parting interview with the Prime Minister, he and his wife sailed from Liverpool on September 1st, for the travel which he had advanced as one of his reasons for quitting office. They arrived in New York on the 12th, and though they had left behind their two friends of the Mendacious Club, they found a warm welcome from others, such as the Duncans, Mr. Choate, Whitelaw Reid, John Sutherland, and the Oliver Belmonts, with whom they stayed at Newport and met most of the gay world of New York. Towards the end of the month they were the guests of Mr. Carnegie and his partners at Pittsburgh, spending the day at the steel works—"on the scene of Braddock's defeat," as Rosebery did not forget to note. They passed on to Chicago, having hired a Pullman car for the journey west, and under the guidance of its enterprising inventor they visited the model settlement of Pullman, with its 64,000 inhabitants, churches, theatres, athletic ground, and all the amenities of a considerable town. Chicago had then almost recovered from the fire of eight years before, but was conspicuous for solid, rather than exciting, elements of interest. After a day there, they passed on to Colonial Bluffs, where 107 dollars had to be paid for extra luggage. But in those more spacious days—"much of it is wine, which has a gradual tendency to diminish." Then to Omaha, past a station which a few years before had been sacked by Indians, and so to Cheyenne and Denver—amazing in the wide prairie, with its 50,000 inhabitants, its sudden splendour, its electric light,

and more telephones than any other town in America.

They pursued their way by Utah, and over the Sierra Nevada to San Francisco. Here they were received hospitably by the local magnates—Sharons, Mills, Floods, and many others. During a fortnight's stay, interrupted by a brief visit to Monterey, they savoured all the wonders of the Western capital—Chinatown ; some neighbouring ranches ; and even an earthquake—the most severe for fifteen years, but not severe enough to awaken Rosebery. There was also a little shooting of duck and other game. One remarkable day produced “about two dozen quail and rabbits, and a yellow-hammer.”

On October 20th the party embarked on the s.s. *Zealandia* and rolled heavily all the week's way to Honolulu. The few hours' stay there was given to sight-seeing, and to a visit of ceremony to the affable chocolate-coloured Sovereign of the islands (October 28th).

The Line was crossed with no greater hardship than a subscription for the benefit of Neptune and his court. The heavy weather did not prevent the mock trial of a teller of travellers' tales, to which a charge of breach of promise was added. Rosebery assisted as Council for the Defence, in a gown devised from a waterproof, an imitation wig of muslin, carrying a green baize bag stuffed with papers adorned with enormous seals.

Auckland was reached on November 11th, and they were hospitably entertained by Mr. Clark, the Mayor. But they saw none of the wonders of New Zealand, going on the same night to Sydney, where they arrived after six days' more heavy rolling. It was the worst weather known for twenty years, as travellers are apt to be told. They had their first sight of the famous harbour by moonlight (November 17th).

Lord and Lady Augustus Loftus entertained them hospitably at Government House, and Lady Rosebery, much tired by the rough voyage, remained there

quietly for the first three weeks. Of these Rosebery spent ten days in a journey to Queensland, going by sea and returning overland, enjoying a sheep-shearing, putting up at bush hotels, and seeing some of his Primrose cousins settled in the Colony.

Melbourne was the next stopping-place (December 12th), and the travellers were the guests of Lord and Lady Normanby. Rosebery wrote to his mother :

“ One misses Sydney Bay very much, which is next to Naples the finest thing I have seen. This is what is called a noble city,—great wide streets like Edinburgh New Town or St. Petersburg, but I am not sure it has the charm of the winding irregularities of Sydney and its hills. However it has no mosquitoes, and not even any mosquito-nets, which shows an appalling sense of security. The people here are much more energetic and pushing than the Sydney people, which is partly the effect of climate, partly the result of a strong American infusion at the time of the discovery of gold.”

From Melbourne a flying visit was paid to Ballarat, where they went down a mine and wielded unrewarding pickaxes. Rosebery returned to Sydney alone (December 22nd); attended a Press dinner; received some political news from England; was impressed by the excellent racing, and the order kept on the race-course; was gorgeously entertained by the sporting magnates; attended a rollicking expedition of drag-net fishing which concluded with a game of rounders, unknown since Bayford days; and felt very unhappy at leaving Sydney. From Hay he made a long drive over the Old Man Plain in a dust-storm:

“ An endless dust-coloured plain, occasionally a cinder coloured tree, the dust skimming swiftly after us like Furies, or any hostile pertinacious spirits. At the change, a lonely inn with a thirsty and exhausted host and hungry and animated flies, I sitting silent in the buggy for fear I should swallow dust, my companions exchanging an occasional murmur: this is a picture of that day, a fair shadow of Purgatory if not worse; and yet—we were not unhappy.”

Warbreccan, a pleasant station of Sir Patrick Jennings's on the Edwards River, was the destination, whence he passed on to the mining centre of Sandhurst, which reminded him of the pictures of Jerusalem, "and if really like it, is certainly Jerusalem the Golden"; and so back to Melbourne. The officer who had captured the Kelly gang of bushrangers showed a suit of their armour made of ploughshares heavily padded within, and described the exciting scene of their destruction. Rosebery was again impressed by the excellence of the racing arrangements at Flemington, except for the undue punishment inflicted by the jockeys.

Both the travellers were fascinated by Tasmania, where they spent four well-filled days (January 3rd): "A pretty enclosed country, ridiculously like England, and stations with names from Scotland." The stage coaches were of the old English type: "I saw these venerable relics of antiquity and thought, not without emotion, of the House of Lords."

At Hobart the Governor, Sir George Strahan, was "a perfect host, so genial, and kindly and energetic." A ghastly experience was the visit to an old prison where the convict lunatics, the dregs of the extinct convict system, were dragging out the rest of their degraded lives. The Superintendent had been at Port Arthur, and had given the author of *His Natural Life* much of the information on which that appalling story is founded. The details were in no way exaggerated: "He astonished me by saying that Macquarie Harbour was the worst of the convict settlements, then Norfolk Island, then Port Arthur. But I suspect that Dante would have got a hint or two from any of them."

All their impressions of Tasmania, its officials and its inhabitants, were of the most agreeable sort, and no happier days were spent anywhere throughout the tour. They returned to Melbourne before starting homewards. At the wedding of a member of the Governor's staff (January 8th)—

“the bridegroom cooler than a cucumber, the church prettily decorated with flowers : the ceremony vague and impulsive, with the impression every now and then ‘a sudden thought seizes me, let us sing a hymn’; and so hymns were sung. Miss _____ at luncheon said that the bridegroom had wished the whole church to be decorated, but as he found it would cost £500 insisted on the adornment of certain parts, the altar, the font——‘And why, in Heaven’s Name,’ I broke in, ‘the font?’ We all laughed consumedly, and Miss _____ blushed in the same ratio.”

There was a banquet given by the Mayor :

“The principal feature was a captain in the Messageries who was brought by a friend and treated by the friend as a Marshal of France. I returned thanks for him, and as soon as I sat down he returned thanks for himself in a language which, as it was something between English and French, I informed an inquisitive neighbour, was the tongue of the Channel Islands,—‘Is it really now?’ Then one of the Ministers set him up figuratively and pommelled him, and gave him so many messages to take back to his Government and people that his own steamer would not have held them.”

Another visit to Flemington on “The Bookmakers’ Day,” when the Ring borrowed the course, gave the prizes, and took the receipts, was followed by a short stay at St. Hubert’s, the pretty centre of an extensive wine-growing estate, whence an expedition was made in blazing heat through glorious scenery and vegetation to Fernshaw and the Black Spur. The last excitement at Melbourne was an exhibition of buck-jumping by the rough-riders of the police :

“It quite came up to my expectation, which is rare. The horse was blindfold when saddled and mounted. The moment the bandage was removed, off he went in the attitude of the Order of the Golden Fleece. But generally after his first mad bucks he turned sulky, a frame of mind from which no amount of flogging would rouse him. The horsemanship was magnificent.”

They started in the s.s. *Adelaide* for the port and capital of that name (January 17th). Sir William

Robinson, the Governor, brother of the better-known Sir Hercules, received them. There was an official reception at the Town Hall, and a banquet, adorned by pipers, in the evening. It was so stifling that on emerging the Governor said that it had changed to a cool breeze, though in fact the hot wind was still blowing. One meeting was destined to bear fruit later on :

“ I had the great pleasure of meeting my old school-fellow Kennion, now Bishop of Adelaide. Fancy one’s contemporary being so shabby as to take a Bishopric and make one feel a hundred. But I forgive him : I believe he is both a saint and a man of business. I have rarely been so fascinated.” ¹

It was not to be supposed that, during a sojourn of nearly ten weeks in Australia, Rosebery would be able to abstain from public speaking. He was a notable Scot, and Scottish societies abounded in all the Colonies, which owed so much to the Northern country. He was a Liberal already conspicuous as a brilliant orator ; Liberal ideas were generally in favour overseas, though the attitude of some Liberal doctrinaires towards the Colonies was freely resented. Speechifying was popular, for the fluent facility which those of British race seem only to acquire when they quit these islands for good had already begun to blossom in Australia. On two occasions the entertainment was Scottish. At Sydney the banquet was given by the Highland Society (December 8th, 1883). In a forty-minute speech, after a tribute to Scotsmen in the Colony, that though imported thistles had become a pest, yet his fellow-countrymen had at any rate managed to gather figs from them, and a half apology for not being a Highlander himself, he explained the prompt result of his visit to Australia, that the abstract sympathy and interest felt all through his life was now quickened into an actual entity, a living and tangible thing. He would carry

¹ Dr. Kennion was appointed Bishop of Bath and Wells during Rosebery’s Premiership.

away two main impressions. The first was that the great masses of the people had an opportunity of living a happier existence than in anywhere else within the British dominions. The second was the boundless future of the country. Its growing population was equal to that of the United States when she declared and wrested her independence from the mother-country. He passed on to touch on the Convention which had just been sitting in Sydney, the first at which the different States, as they now are, met for the interchange of ideas on subjects not merely local. It had reached two conclusions : the first the exclusion of convict settlements from the Pacific ; the second the cautious encouragement of federal relations between the Australian Colonies. He approved of both resolutions, and trusted that Scotsmen, their sons and their sons' sons, might be privileged to bear a part in building up in this land of milk and honey, secluded from the curse of rivalries and traditions and strifes in our older world, a state which shall have the prerogative of peace, which shall satisfy the imperious instincts of a dominant race, and not merely these instincts, but also some of the noblest and some of the happiest aspirations of suffering mankind.

The second national occasion was the Speech Day of the Scotch College at Melbourne (December 19th, 1883). After the usual request for a whole holiday, he claimed that the Scottish race have the greatest thirst for knowledge of any nation that is known in this world. In a country of universal suffrage such as Australia, everybody's duty is to fit himself by education for the task of government, so he called on the students to fit themselves for the high duty of citizenship for the sake of Victoria and for the greater Australia looming in the future.

On December 10th, Mr. E. Barton, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, gave a dinner to both Houses of the New South Wales Parliament, which both the Governor and Rosebery attended. He said

that his early hopes of beginning a speech with “Mr. Speaker” had been frustrated, so his pleasure in doing so now could be imagined. It amazed any Englishman to see how far local government could be carried with efficiency and self-respect, as a contrast to the single government exercised at home over thirty millions of people, many of whom were supposed to be incapable of self-government. He again dwelt on the Convention and an Englishman’s interest in the Federation of Australia, which would enable her to speak with a broad voice entitled to respect in the civilised world. Australia could thus speak to the mother-country with the voice of an eldest son who has attained his majority, and on whom the property is strictly entailed.

“ I will ask you only to remember one thing in your dealings with the old country, as I wish statesmen in the old country to remember it in their dealings with you. It is that neither you nor they should reason too much from precedent or from history. It has made its own history ; it is creating its own precedent, it is steering its path into the future, where no chart and no compass can guide it. Least of all can she forecast her own relations with her own Empire, and God forbid that you or I, or any of us, or any of them in the old country, should attempt to do it at this time. Let us do the best we can, and work for the best. She can only blindly work, trying to do her best for these her children—for her greatest children as for her least children—and in that attempt I pray she may be successful. Her relations with her colonies cannot any longer be defined. People talk of the Roman colonies, of the Greek colonies, of the military colonies, and of the American colonies. We have nothing to do with those colonies. They have interesting records, but they furnish no guidance now for the British Empire. We have outlived that time of minority and instruction. Her relations with her colonies are, it seems to me, of a complicated and of an intricate nature. They are connected by a golden thread of affection and of descent. They are cemented, Gentlemen, more closely than anything by the fact that there are few of us in England who have not got relations or kinsfolk working among you here. When they talk of cutting us adrift from you, or

cutting you adrift from us, people do not seem to remember that that is the case, and that we do not care deliberately to cut ourselves off from our own blood and our own flesh. But as regards your relations with the mother-country, I would sum them up in a single sentence, by saying that, in the strict sense of the word, she does not attempt to guide, she does not pretend to control, but she does regard her giant offspring with a pride which it would be the merest affectation to conceal."

This address was enthusiastically applauded, and there was surely no little foresight in this early recognition of the practical independence of what were then styled the Self-governing Colonies in managing their own affairs.

At Melbourne also the Mayor entertained the Governor and his guest (January 9th, 1884). Rosebery again laid stress on the Convention. Like Sancho Panza, who had been forced by the stern doctor beside him at the banquet to forgo all the daintiest dishes, he had been compelled by Dr. Time to sacrifice such dainty fare as a visit to New Zealand, one of the most energetic of colonies. Everything had been sacrificed to arrival in Australia while the Convention was still sitting. One speaker at a previous banquet had seemed to think that the great object of the Convention was to have one Parliament alone for the whole of Australia.

"However that may be, let me impress one thing upon you. Our bitter experience in the old country should lead you to prize local government as the greatest of all gifts. We are endeavouring in Great Britain to recover our lost local government. I hope that you in the colonies will never make such a mistake as to forfeit that local government. If I remember aright, I have heard a dread murmured that if federation took place, and if Australasia became a dominion as Canada is, there would be some danger of Australasia desiring to separate from the mother-country. (No! No!) I only mention that as an argument that has been used, and I am quite sure that everybody here has heard it used as an argument against confederation.

“ Now, I don’t profess to define for one moment what is the basis on which the British Empire rests. I do not believe that such a conglomeration has ever been seen since the world began, and I don’t believe that anyone here or outside this room can give any satisfactory account to the logical mind of the basis on which that Empire rests, because it is not a matter of compact or of civil contract. The connection between Great Britain and her colonies is a marriage of the affections, or it is nothing at all. It has been said very lately by a writer who has visited Australia, Mr. Forbes, and who is entitled to great weight on his own account, that the connection of Australia with the mother-country would not survive a war (dissent). Well, that is a question on which I am wholly incompetent to judge. I have naturally no experience, nor have you, to judge whether that is so or not. But my belief is that the connection of loyalty between Australia and the mother-country would survive a war. And would survive, as long as other things were equal, as long as the home country and the daughter-country were allowed to preserve their positions of mutual independence and mutual self-respect. I believe that if those are observed, the connection of the colonies—and I am speaking of Australia more particularly—with the mother-country will become closer and not looser than before.

“ There is no subject so interesting to Englishmen as the future of the British Empire. To many it is merely a fortuitous agglomeration of nations and of countries. To some it is simply a series of accidents. To others it is only a grammatical expression. I believe it is none of these, but at the same time when we come to think how many climates, how many races, how many religions, how many forms of government are comprised within the British Empire, we cannot be surprised that it is beyond the minds of those who have endeavoured to define it. What can be more puzzling than the fact that this city, which can only send a letter and receive an answer to it from London four times in the year, should remain attached by sympathy and by affection to the centre of our Empire? It would seem that there could be no common interests and no common affection. But there is an old tradition—I don’t know if it remains good—that in the British Royal dockyards every rope that is manufactured, from the largest cable to the smallest twine, has a single red thread through it, which pervades the whole strand, and

which, if unpacked, destroys the whole rope. That was the sign of the Royal production of those ropes. Though I distrust metaphors, I believe that that metaphor holds good to some extent of the British Empire. It is held together by the single red line and that red line is the communion of races. I have always hoped that that communion of races might exist as long as my life lasted, but since my visit to Australia it will become a passion with me to endeavour to preserve that union and to serve this country of which I can never have any but the happiest and most delightful memories ; while if there is anything that I can do to serve either this or any of the other colonies of Australia you, Gentlemen, may reckon upon my doing it.”

Rosebery’s farewell message to Australia was delivered at Adelaide (January 18th), in the surroundings of grilling heat to which allusion has been made :

“ What with the hot wind my audience was languid. What with the hot wind and the difficulty of coping with the Town Hall, I was languid. I had not had enough preparation, and there was an old drunkard who interrupted. The result was that though I spoke for an hour, it was uphill work. It was not an after-dinner speech, but I had to deliver it, and had no other opportunity.”

It was indeed his most finished utterance in Australia, grave with the consciousness of departure from the glorious country which probably he might never see again, and animated by the confession of his faith in the future of the British Empire. After touching on the special characteristics of South Australia, and the achievements of the Sydney Convention, he went on :

“ Now, sir, what conclusion do I draw from this recital ? Why have I told you things which must be more or less familiar to yourselves ? I do it for this reason. I say that these are no longer colonies in the ordinary sense of the term, but I claim that this is a nation—a nation not in aspiration or in the future, but in performance and fact. I claim that this country has established to be a nation, and that its nationality

is now and will be henceforward recognised by the world. Sir, that is a great position to take, and I think the facts I have stated substantiate it. But there is a further question, and it is this : Does this fact of your being a nation, and I think you feel yourselves to be a nation, imply separation from the Empire ? God forbid ! There is no need for any nation, however great, leaving the Empire, because the Empire is a commonwealth of nations.”

Fifty years later the phrase has become a commonplace of political terminology. Then it was the announcement of a new gospel. He proceeded to dwell on the anomaly of asking the Parliament at Westminster, oppressed by the appalling problem of Ireland, puzzled by the adaptation of ancient institutions to the needs of the nineteenth century, and by the riddle of the government of London, to devote its energies to Australian affairs. He asked Australians to be tolerant, because they were much better left alone, and because the time must come for some adjustment of the burden which would bind the Empire closer together. Australia could claim to be a nation, making its own history, since it had won self-government, and isolated in a manner which no other nation has been or could be for the purpose of remaining an Empire of peace. She would not desert the old country if war should come, but the British fleet must be strong enough to protect their shores.

“ I may say that with every day the chances of England being at war with any other European power grow less, because every day she looks less to other people’s empires and more to her own.”

He concluded with the recital of his Imperial creed :

“ It seems to me that hand in hand they may yet follow up a career of usefulness to mankind—led by those common and eternal principles of justice which alone can exalt and sustain a nation, and which we proudly boast and humbly hope have long guided and directed the British Empire ; which have been the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night

that have guided us to so many achievements and through so many troubles. I believe that every day we remain united we shall be less anxious to part. I believe that every day we remain united it will be considered more desirable that we should continue so, not merely for our own selfish interests, but for the interest of humanity at large : because it is on the British race, whether in Great Britain, or the United States, or the Colonies, or wherever it may be, that rest the highest hopes of those who try to penetrate the dark future, or who seek to raise and better the patient masses of mankind. Each year the power and the prerogative of that race appear to me to increase ; each year it seems to fill more and more of the world. I believe that the connection of the British Empire will remain, for the reason that it is desirable for civilisation that it should continue to exist. I confess I think that each day that we live we shall be more and more unwilling to see this ancient Empire of ours—raised with so much toil, colonised with so much energy, cemented with the blood and sweat of so many generations—pass away like a camp struck noiselessly in the night, or split into isolated and sterile communities, jealous among themselves, disturbed by suburban disputes and parochial rivalries, dwindling possibly, like the Italian States of the middle ages, into political insignificance, or degenerating into idle and polite nonentity. And, sir, let me remind this assemblage of the fact—that empires, and especially great empires, when they crumble at all, are apt to crumble exceedingly small.

“ I have only a word to say now, and that is the saddest of all words, because it is good-bye. My visit to Australia, short as it has been, has had this result—that it has quickened my feelings of interest in Australia into affection, and has divided my feeling towards your country between my head and my heart. We do not indeed have the same aspirations as to weather. The divinity that we worship in Great Britain is the sun ; but here the object of adoration and desire are the clouds. And now I feel I have to leave your sunshine for our clouds ; but I can safely promise that among our clouds I shall cherish the recollection of your sunshine. Whatever I can do in the smallest way to justify the kindness with which I have been received here I will do. I shall form aspirations for your future even higher, perhaps, than you now form for yourselves. And I shall not be accused of any unnatural or excessive unselfishness in forming these aspirations, because I think that the majority of Englishmen have come to know

this—that in forming good wishes for the future of Australia they are forming good wishes for the future of our Empire."

Rosebery spoke informally on several other occasions, but such were the prominent utterances of his Australian sojourn. They were recorded by him in detail, because the tour came to be something of a turning-point in his career. The doubts that had long floated in his mind concerning the destiny of the British Empire in the fast-changing conditions of the time were now crystallising into the conviction that a new outlook was imperatively demanded at home. At this moment Australia presented the finest field for the birth of such a conviction. The gold fever of the fifties had given place to a vast though wavering production of the precious metals ; the convict settlements had become a painful historical memory, almost as unreal as the fires of Smithfield. The great squatting estates and urban properties begat vast fortunes with no present menace to the claims of humbler folk, and thus did not excite general envy ; the facilities of transport and communication multiplied day by day. There was little poverty and no mendicancy. No wonder that a perfervid Scot like Rosebery, seeing what a part Scotsmen had played in this marvellous pageant of prosperity, was altogether captivated. His deep absorption of the Imperial idea, destined to colour his after-life so powerfully, dates from this year of travel.

The s.s. *Paramatta* started on her voyage to Ceylon. There was a brief pause at Albany, where there was a show of native dancing and spear-throwing, but Perth could not be visited. The fifteen days to Colombo were for the most part passed in ideal weather. "It is impossible to conceive anything more perfect than gliding along this blue sea under the sunshine of this blue sky." On another day he noted :

"In the afternoon there were athletic sports. There is on board an 'Amusements Committee,' which fully justifies Sir George Lewis's sensible remark."

But there was variety in conversation with personages such as Sir Frederick Haines, the Indian Commander-in-Chief, and Joe Thompson, the leviathan bookmaker from Melbourne, who sang comic songs one evening. Reading was a great resource. *The Wealth of Nations* ; *The Life of Hook* ("What a noble fellow!"); Carlyle's prose translation of Dante; Mrs. Howe's "well-written life of that vast impostor *Margaret Fuller*"; Burke's *French Revolution*—"I am rather disappointed with it, though of course no one else could have written it. But he is so completely, though naturally and accountably in the wrong"—novels by Trollope and one or two others; these make up a good bill of fare.

The arrival at Colombo inspired Rosebery to an almost dithyrambic flight of fancy which must be recorded :

"I left land, when I saw it last, which was instinct with the rude life of the future of England making her way in the wilderness. And now, when I land again, I set foot in the mysterious East, glowing with its sunlight and its myriad colours, with its petty eagerness, its hand to mouth existence, and its ant-heap swarms of population. This not an hour or a morning or a year: it is nothing less than an existence teeming with new impressions and boundless vistas of idea. I can describe nothing, I could not criticise or even notice, I remained in a passive receptive state, plunged with every mental pore open in this vast ocean of ancient novelty. The outriggers, with naked bronze figures guiding them, the lonely, skinny fisher in his frail boat, the solemn Mohammedian merchant with his singularly inconvenient basket cap on the back of his head, the diver plunging for his sixpence, the washermen with their greasy certificates of worth by former passengers tendered to their successors, the hungry jewellers with their choicest gems tendered for a few shillings, every head turbaned, every form lean, every mouth blood-red with betel, all this one saw before one landed."

Sir Arthur Gordon,¹ the younger son of the statesman Lord Aberdeen, reigned at the Queen's House as

¹(1829-1912.) G.C.M.G. M.P. 1854-7. After holding several Colonial Governorships, Governor of Ceylon 1883-90. Cr. Lord Stanmore 1893.

Governor. Rosebery enjoyed hearing the political verdicts of an older man brought up in the very centre of affairs, but professionally aloof from them.

"We talked over Gladstone's (ecclesiastical) patronage. I told him that I had repeated Sir R. Peel's phrase 'the odious power conferred by patronage' to Gladstone, applying it to his probable feelings, and that Gladstone had at once replied that he enjoyed his patronage very much. 'Yes,' said Sir Arthur, 'many persons dislike patronage, because they know that every appointment they make creates one ungrateful person and a host of enemies according to the old saying, but it never occurs to Gladstone for a moment that anybody may be disappointed or aggrieved.' I added that Gladstone has the valuable faculty of always making up his mind, when he has made an appointment, that it is the best possible, and that no other would be one quarter as good. This is an immense saving of mental worry. But I also said that once I had a long talk with him when the air was dark with difficulties, but he spoke of the filling up of a Welsh bishopric as the most important of them all. 'Yes,' said Sir Arthur, 'what my father always said of him is very true, he has no sense of mental perspective.' Sir Arthur did not speak, I thought, very warmly of Gladstone, but with a lurking bitterness. He said that the man Gladstone really detested was Palmerston, that he (Sir A.) had lately had a conversation with Mr. G. on Mr. G.'s own position, which Mr. G. had begun by asking him if he remembered a conversation of theirs twenty-one years ago, in which Mr. G. had spoken of the horrible spectacle presented by an old man clinging to power long after efficiency had left him, i.e. Palmerston. Gladstone hoped he would never appear to the world in that light. Sir A. believes him to have an ardent anxiety for retirement. I said I did not think it was so strong as it had been in 1881 and 1882. . . . He told me he had once seen Metternich completely put down. After the great smash at Vienna in 1848 he was fond of reading his memoirs aloud. One day at Richmond in 1849 he was doing this when, on a pause, Madame de Lieven threw herself back with a desperate gesture of weariness, and said aloud: 'Oh, mon Dieu ! que cela m'ennuie !' Metternich collapsed."

Rosebery went with Sir Arthur's other guest, Sir William Gregory, to visit Arabi Pasha, the interned Egyptian exile—

"A fine-looking man, with broad powerful face, and a forehead which, though not high, is instinct with capacity."

The interpreting was weak, but Rosebery gathered that Arabi had intended to make the Mahdi Governor of some part of the Sudan, and that he could not see why parliamentary institutions should not work in Egypt. When Rosebery mentioned the sixty million Mohammedans in India, Arabi observed that people who were well governed would stand by their rulers, rather boldly applying the same consideration to the Government of Turkey.

"On leaving him he informed me that this was the happiest hour he had spent in Ceylon, the Oriental method, I suppose, of saying good-bye.

"Thompson, the Australian bookmaker, and his family, five in number, had come to see the famous exile, lying in wait under the verandah. When I looked round Joe had got Arabi tight by the right hand, which he was shaking with agonizing vehemence."

The other event of their stay was an excursion to Kandy (February 5th). It is a fascinating place, and the travellers were enchanted by the gardens of Perediniya, with their colossal bamboos and flowering trees, and by the town with its temples and silent lake. The same evening they started homewards. Rosebery left Ceylon in a mood not less exalted than when he first got sight of it, and again tried to embalm his sensations in words :

"In these two days it seems to me that I have lived nine lives of a cat. I have never in years, I think, received so many absolutely new impressions. I feel like the blind man whose eyelids were anointed with the clay laid on by the Messiah's hand : I did not believe there was a sensation so novel left in the world, or rather a world so novel left for sensation. It is a golden dream to carry through life, a life which must always be brighter for this one little ray of the rare Eastern sunshine let in through a chink of time into the foggy chamber of a British existence."

To Hannah Rosebery, too, Ceylon was an indescribably beautiful fairyland.

The voyage to Suez was like all other voyages, diversified by such incidents as the abstraction of a silk kammerband by a female rat as a nest for her family, and a wordy dispute between passengers on the proceedings of the Amusements Committee. Of this last Rosebery set down an Homeric account. But he got through plenty of reading: the translation of the *Inferno*, Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* ("What a marvellous vision!"), and the *Life of Alcibiades*:

"One never realised sufficiently his great ability. The Duke of Wharton, I think, must have taken him as his model. It is the only way to explain him. Read also Gehring's little *Life of Mozart*, what a prodigy! Yet perhaps he did not die prematurely. For he began so early and worked so hard that he had lived for at least thirty years of intense composition and suggestion. Few people live more. Nothing is more futile than to measure life by years."

But the plum was the correspondence of Lord Aberdeen, which Sir Arthur had had privately printed for his own use, and of which he lent four volumes to Rosebery for the voyage.

"But I conscientiously fear that he should never let them go out of his own hands. The imagination cannot picture what the Queen must think about it if she knows it. Heaven forfend!"¹

The customary pause at Aden awakened fresh thoughts of the Empire and its meaning:

"After all, one's final reflection on Aden is *Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?* That we should have established ourselves, our coal, and fortifications to protect our coal, on a parched rock in Arabia, is full of suggestion. That we should have done so as an incident of our Indian Empire

¹ The whole correspondence was placed at the disposal of Lady Frances Balfour for the *Life of Lord Aberdeen* published in 1923. It is now, with other papers of Lord Aberdeen's, in the British Museum.

is a fact of tenacity. That we should there have received and revived the tanks of Solomon is a singular succession and a pregnant thought."

Before reaching Suez, Rosebery filled several pages of his diary with a descriptive report of his fellow-passengers, their looks, and their ways. He concluded mysteriously :

" Why do I scribble all this insignificant balderdash ? I have my reasons. More I will not and cannot say."

They dawdled through the Canal, past Ismailia, which reminded him " of a small pot of French polish upset on the desert," to Port Said, which " gave the impression of a town composed of the packing cases left by passing ships." There they changed into another steamer, obliged to occupy seven whole days on the journey to Marseilles, so as to avoid three days of quarantine there, " which makes one feel as if one was riding a horse in a race which one knew to be drugged." Thus it was again a dawdle, though sometimes a less flat dawdle, through the Mediterranean, past " the jagged rock of Scylla with its little town flung over it like jetsam," and Charybdis, unidentifiable among several whirlpools ; past " the charred cone of Stromboli with vineyards soothing its scarred sides, and on the side of the summit, like a wound, the crater rolling out dense clouds of smoke ; on the left the islands, once, if I am not mistaken, the Insulæ Æolides, all silent volcanoes, watching Stromboli as old men watch the sports they once loved." ¹ The travellers reached Marseilles, lunched at the Réserve, where all the world goes for *bouillabaisse*, and found themselves at Paris at the opening of spring (March 2nd). It was early days for the *dimanche anglais*, but Rosebery was surprised to find almost all the shops shut. He and his wife shopped

¹ Rosebery's classical memory was almost correct : the Lipari, a group of ten islands, had several names in ancient times, Æolidæ Insulæ for one.

inveterately in Paris, so this made a greater kindness of his hurry to reach London.

" We had meant to stop over to-morrow, but letters came from Reay saying that he had been offered the governorship of Victoria and could not make up his mind without consulting me. So we proceeded this evening to London."¹

The Government still seemed prosperous enough, if it could survive the approaching conflict with the House of Lords on the terms whereby household suffrage should be extended to the counties. The Roseberys had gone straight to the Durdans, where the children were settled, but in a few days he saw Gladstone in London.

" He seemed changed. Talked to him about Lord Aberdeen's correspondence. He replied ' Nobody cares a d . . . for Lord Aberdeen.' He also said that the Government wished Ripon to stick to his guns in the Ilbert Bill. The House of Lords could not force a dissolution on the Franchise Bill, but the Government might go to wreck on Egypt. Hartington and Granville both came in."

A little later the Gladstones spent part of the Easter vacation at the Durdans (April 8th), when the Prime Minister

" talked about Reform. I argued with him about the Irish.² He suddenly broke off : ' I am sick of contention : I cannot at my age spend the rest of my life in contention.' As to minorities, the best plan would perhaps be to establish wards as in Municipal elections. He passed on to the difficulty of either leaving or governing Egypt, a country in which slavery and corporal punishment existed, but he saw no difficulty in its finance. No parallel was to be drawn with India, which was not a Moslem country, and had behind it the history of the East India Company. If we were to govern Egypt we give up French alliance for ever. Not but

¹ This appointment was not made. Lord Reay became Governor of Bombay in 1885 till 1890.

² The extension to Ireland of the new Franchise would make the case for Home Rule infinitely stronger, as Hartington and others foresaw.

what we need no alliance and are strong enough to stand alone. The Government might break up on Egypt. He asked what I thought. I told him. He remained silent, and after a minute said 'You could probably not put that view of the case more forcibly' and retired into the house."

Rosebery's view, needless to say, was not that of divesting this country of responsibility for Egypt or of dependence on agreement with France. During their walks, the Prime Minister astonished Rosebery by not knowing that Chamberlain wished to be Irish Secretary when Frederick Cavendish was appointed, and said that, though he did not wish it done in his time, the Privy Seal should be held by the Prime Minister. Rosebery gathered that he might take it, but that, being a Commoner, he would require a regulation of the Queen to give him the proper precedence. "Dizzy" had taken it at the beginning of a financial year, and took the salary which had been voted.

There was also a long talk with Goschen (March 23rd), when walking the Derby course, Rosebery's favourite promenade with his guests, whether interested or not in that Isthmian track. Rosebery somewhat evaded questions about his political programme, but summed up his position as being able to support the Government on Reform, after Hartington's speech, the only black spot being the retention of the number of Irish members.¹

The Durdans was their headquarters till Easter, when Rosebery repaired to Scotland for a week, when he received the Freedom of Dundee.

The Provost welcomed him (April 15th) as the man Scotland needed in the difficult future. Rosebery devoted most of his speech of thanks to the Colonies. He was surprised at the indifference with which Britain regarded her great possessions all over the world. France, far less densely populated than we,

¹ See *Life of Gladstone*, bk. viii, ch. viii, § v, for the great debate on this question in the House of Commons in May.

was making efforts to create a Colonial Empire. There was a school of economists who would limit our dominions to the three countries of these islands, of which one by no stretch of the imagination could be considered attached to the other two. He, on the contrary, thought it mattered enormously that the stream of emigration should flow to other parts of the Empire. Were it not for the flag the trade of Australasia would naturally flow to America. Separation of the Colonies would be like building over the open spaces of a large town, for they are the breathing spaces for the Empire to depend on. But Parliament would never find time for Imperial questions without extension of local self-government and administration. He begged, too, for expression of that sympathy which might be felt but never reached the outlying parts of the Empire—they were left to believe that they were ignored and forgotten in the councils of the nation. Sympathy would reap its own abundant harvest of reward.

A civic ceremony at Edinburgh was followed by a banquet starting at 6.30. After the twenty-six speeches had been made, at 10.45, Rosebery “sneaked away” to Barnbougle, where he spent the next day arranging books. He returned to Epsom and a bachelor party for the Spring Meeting, but the old Duke of Buccleuch had died, and he found a letter from Lord Dalkeith asking him to attend the funeral. A night journey made this just possible. At the “tender and impressive” ceremony he kept out of the way, but was observed by the grandson. The new Duke, the defeated candidate of 1880, “sent me frequent messages to say how sorry he was to miss me, and that he should never forget my coming till the end of his life.” He was right in feeling that Rosebery’s presence meant more than a courteous formality to a neighbour. Personal liking and Scottish sentiment alike directed him to Dalkeith. On his return he found a letter from Gladstone, offering him the Lieutenancy of Midlothian, in succession to the late

Duke. This he at once declined. But there was no Liberal landowner of sufficient standing as an alternative, and after being begged to reconsider his refusal, he wrote agreeing to become a *pis aller* as Lord Lieutenant, though he was giving up more than his Chief could guess in surrendering at all. The Prime Minister did not often find such coyness in the ranks of possible office holders.

It was sixteen years since Rosebery took his seat in the House of Lords. He had played a fair part in its current business, without becoming one of the worker bees who can collect no honey except in its Committee-rooms or on the Committee stage of some involved Bill in the House itself. His ready wit, not less than the capacity for hard work and close investigation proved by some of his speeches, had made him the most conspicuous figure of his generation on the red benches. But he could not feel entirely satisfied with what he saw there. Whatever the ideal Second Chamber might be, nobody could imagine that the House of Lords approached that ideal either in theory or in practice. At any rate it was worth while to examine the possibilities of improvement by constituting an organ which, if not altogether impartial, should be strictly well-balanced, to make a report to the House itself. A Select Committee, carefully chosen, would be such a body. Rosebery accordingly moved (June 20th) :

“ That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the best means of promoting the efficiency of this House,”

not starting an academic discussion as he said, but making a practical proposition. After admitting that there was no precedent for such a committee, he sketched the different changes in the composition of the House during the six centuries of its existence. The greatest was the swamping of the House under George III. At his accession there were 174 Peers, of whom 149 had seats in the House. During his reign 388 were created, 140 on the advice of Mr.

Pitt. A curious proof of the change was that on the first reading of the first Reform Bill, of the Peers created before 1790, 104 voted for the Bill, and only four against it. The Bill was thrown out mainly by Mr. Pitt's Peers. Then came other innovations, such as the abolition of proxies, and lately, the admission of judicial Life Peers. But infinitely more marked were the movements outside—the enormous powers now vested in the House of Commons, the creation of the Newspaper Press, and of the Colonial Empire.

Is the House of Lords efficient? A delicate question, but at any rate not so efficient as it might be made. Take 120 Peers, official, diplomatic, naval and military, and men of letters. The Senate at Washington surely could not produce so many distinguished individuals, yet it carries greater weight, not because it is an elected body, because many elected Second Chambers are not valuable institutions. It was absurd that the House of Lords should be content with a quorum of three, and that after an idle session all the legislation of the year should be crowded into "one hour of glorious life." The system of joint committees ought to be examined, both for public and private legislation. The popularity of the House was neither so great as its friends assert nor so small as its enemies made out. But it might represent some vital principle more powerful than popularity by including more of a great variety of complex interests—the various operations of our vast Empire, commerce, the professions, the Church. The dissenting bodies ought to be represented; while, though the Army and the Law were there in numbers, and the Navy to some extent, medicine was entirely absent, and science would be, except for the happy accident of Lord Rayleigh's presence. Four or five Peers spoke for the banking and railway interests, but commercial interests generally could not here compare with the enormous weight they carried in the other House. Again, there was too much receiv-

ing and too little paying of rent. A noble lord from Ireland shook his head,¹ and Rosebery had to admit that he understood his meaning, but said that everybody was in the same boat. Again, the Arts were not directly represented.

He passed on to quote a long extract from a speech by Lord Salisbury in 1869 when the creation of Life Peers was being considered. The Conservative leader then said that the Peers were too much of one class, and therefore often too much of one mind ; they wanted more representation of diverse views, and more antagonism. Rosebery held that the question of Life Peers was too large to discuss at the moment, but his Committee could consider the possible extension of the principle already admitted by the nomination of Law Lords. He suggested a select committee " which might either be a hatching machine or a sepulchre," because he did not think that any individual Peer, whatever his authority as leader of a party, could hope to carry any substantial proposition of reform. Therefore the chance for any suggestion of his own would be small indeed. He would gladly have waited if anybody of more importance had taken up the question, but he believed that every day of postponement did harm. This was in the best sense a conservative motion. Its only meaning and scope was investigation. Some of the ardent spirits of his party did not wish to see the House reformed.

" They wish to point it out as a mediæval barque, stranded by strange chance, or irony of time, across the teeming harbour of the 19th century, and acting only as an obstacle to more active and useful shipping."

¹ It was a joke at Trinity College, Dublin, that factory of happy jokes, that an Irish M.P. had quoted the line :

" O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint ! "

and that the goddess Echo had answered from the Irish mountains :

" No rint ! "

He hoped that their Lordships would not play their enemies' game on this occasion, and concluded with the belief that the Peers could best guard the honour of generations, both living and dead, and yet unborn, by embracing vigilantly every opportunity of testing the soundness of the structure of the House by examining its foundations. The motion was shortly seconded by Lord Onslow, a few years younger than Rosebery, and just becoming prominent as an active Conservative of the forward school.¹

Lord Granville spoke of the mover's "incisiveness and sympathy and more than usual ability," but politely sprinkled cold water on the plan of a select committee with a wide reference. At the same time he indicated his liking for Life Peerages. Lord Salisbury was not less complimentary to the great eloquence and ability of Rosebery's speech. He also favoured Life Peerages in principle, but, while willing to consider any special proposals, did not think that "a mere fishing committee" would be an advantage. It was a time of rapid transition, and therefore not one for gratuitous changes. Lord Kimberley thought the select committee an indignified and vague conclusion for the House to adopt, and begged Rosebery not to force them to vote against his proposal. In the event a division was first taken on the suggestion that Life Peerages should be specially named as a subject for the committee's consideration. This was defeated, the Government voting with Rosebery but the Conservative phalanx opposing. When the original motion was put, Lord Granville and his colleagues walked out; but Rosebery was joined by some independent Conservative Peers, so that his defeat was a shade less severe than on the first division. He was genuinely annoyed by the half-heartedness of his former colleagues, noting in his journal that "our

¹ 4th Earl of Onslow (1853-1911). Several times Under-Secretary of State; Governor of New Zealand 1889-92; President of the Board of Agriculture 1903-5; Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords 1905-11.

front bench got into hopeless and ridiculous confusion," and in his bound volume of *Hansard*, "the Government walked out amidst jeers." And he was not alone in being indignant. Reginald Brett, with whom he was intimate both as a later pupil of William Cory and as Hartington's secretary, was a frequent correspondent. He wrote (June 24th): "The impression is strong that Lord Granville ought to be rid of (1) Egyptian negotiations,¹ (2) reply to Rosebery's speech. Fowler of Wolverhampton was saying so."

The speech itself received many compliments. Lord George Hamilton wrote enthusiastically as a Conservative onlooker (June 23rd); and Lord Houghton:

" You could not have done it better. It was the most amusing speech I have ever heard in the House, and reminded me of the old days before all the champagne was dry and all the ale bitter, and clever men were not ashamed of being pleasant."

Nearly fifty years have passed, and the fact that the composition of the House of Lords remains as it was in 1884, though circumstances brought about some restriction of its powers, may or may not be taken as an excuse for the Liberal apathy shown on this occasion and the subsequent neglect of Conservative Governments to tackle the question of reform. It will be seen how, in later years, Rosebery clung to the hope that something definite should be done.

So much for the House of Lords. It aroused a passing breeze, but the Representation of the People Bill, which was to affect the composition of the next House of Commons—and Governments and Oppositions alike find it difficult to look beyond the next House of Commons—threatened a tempest that might develop into a tornado. Extension of the franchise to householders in the counties must involve some redistribution of seats; but how, and when, was that redistribu-

¹ Lord Granville had made a statement in the House of Lords on June 28th on the exchange of views with France on Egyptian finance and the British occupation.

tion to be accomplished ? Tories feared that if the Franchise Bill were passed, then redistribution might be gerrymandered wholly to their disadvantage. The Government saw that if the passing of the Franchise measure were contingent on the Redistribution Bill, the latter would in fact be framed by Lord Salisbury and his majority in the House of Lords. This extension of the franchise had been mooted by resolution in 1876 by Mr. Trevelyan, when Disraeli was in power ; it raised no new principle, and was known to be inevitable at some not distant time. The Bill passed the House of Commons by a large majority ; but when the second reading came on in the House of Lords, Lord Cairns did not move its rejection but an amendment, demanding that the Bill should not come into operation except as part of an entire scheme of redistribution. A great debate ensued, displaying the Second Chamber at the height of its oratorical powers. Rosebery spoke on the second day. He followed Lord Brabourne, a country gentleman of lettered tastes, who, having accepted a peerage from Gladstone in 1880, had seldom supported the Government and now sorrowfully announced his intention of voting for the amendment. His speech was frankly hostile to the Liberal party, and the opportunity was too good for Rosebery to miss. "The anguish," he said, "with which the noble Lord found himself obliged to vote against the Government showed that his coronet must be a crown of thorns, because ever since he had a seat in the House it had been his consistent and inevitable fate thus to vote."

Having planted this fatal dart, Rosebery asked the House what it would gain by retarding this measure of justice ? It was impossible now to combine redistribution with franchise, not only because every member who might be affected would join in the discussion, but because questions must be raised touching the root of the administration of the Empire. There was the complex question of Ireland. Scotland was under-represented and could not be overlooked.

There were questions of proportional representation and the claims of minorities. The Opposition had stultified themselves in the House of Commons by proposing to add 500,000 women voters to the 2,000,000 named in the Bill. And the country would not stand the postponement of redistribution, if that was what the Opposition feared. The measure could not have been produced before because it obviously was a prelude to a general election ; the House of Lords had no more moral claim to reject such a measure than the House of Commons would have to reject on second reading a Bill passed by the House of Lords to reform itself ; and therefore the technical prerogative of rejection should not be exercised. The House, that ancient institution, was being placed in the risky and unsuitable position of trying to dam a torrent of popular feeling :

“ I see a situation as grave as the unwisdom of a leader and the misguided strength of a party in this House are able to produce. I do not pretend to say that we have at stake to-night the existence of this House, because I do not think so ; but we have at stake that without which existence is not valuable or tolerable,—the weight and authority which are given by wise decisions and by sympathy with the nation,—that nation for which we legislate, but which governs us.”

He appealed to the independent Press and to the Episcopal bench “ who preach a Gospel which is not merely a message of peace and goodwill to the world, but which is also the highest and purest conception of democracy yet vouchsafed to mankind.”

Among the later speakers, the Archbishop of Canterbury,¹ as though in response to this appeal, urged that a second reading be given to the Bill, the necessary redistribution to follow immediately. Lord Salisbury, in his most bitterly sarcastic mood, mocked at Rosebery’s description of the Bill as a matter of justice and principle, whereas it was a mere exhibition of

¹ Edward White Benson (1829–1896). Bishop of Truro 1877, Archbishop of Canterbury 1882.

parliamentary tactics by a Government which, having a majority, did not wish to lose that majority. He utterly scorned the threats that public opinion would resent the action of the House.

Lord Granville wound up the debate in a more systematic speech than he usually found necessary, covering all the ground with singular skill. Of Rosebery's speech he asserted :

“ One of the most remarkable speeches I have heard delivered in this House was from the noble Earl, who I think may be complimented on the share he had in the Midlothian campaign. His was a blast which not only filled this House, but will reach the furthest confines of the United Kingdom.”

The division was remarkable, the Government securing no less than 146 votes against 205 strict Conservatives, whipped up from the highways and hedges. The minority counted some hundred more votes than in an ordinary party division. Dukes had begun to mistrust Mr. Gladstone, but no less than eleven of these personages voted for the second reading, against twelve who sought the opposite lobby. More significant still, whereas only one Bishop supported the amendment, both Archbishops and ten Bishops voted for the second reading, giving a gallant response to Rosebery's appeal. Still more amazing was a note which reached him before the division :

Private.

MARLBOROUGH HOUSE, July 8th, 1884.

“ MY DEAR ROSEBERY,

“ I must write you two lines to tell you *how* I admired your speech. It was simply splendid, and so much to the point in every sense of the word. You spoke for upwards of an hour—and it seemed to me like ten minutes.

“ Tell me candidly your opinion whether you think there would be any Constitutional objection if in my position I voted with the Government.

“ I am,

“ Yours very sincerely,

“ ALBERT EDWARD.”

It was not exactly a party division, but it is safe to conclude that Windsor Castle would not have approved of the inclusion of that illustrious name in the division list, in which, needless to say, it did not appear. Rosebery noted of his own effort: "I spoke from 7 to 8 with some success." A stream of congratulations flowed in from England and Scotland. A letter worth mentioning came from one of the acutest minds among journalists of that day:

July 12th, 1884.

"MY DEAR ROSEBERY,

"I cannot abstain from troubling you with this line expressing all my deep appreciation of, and conveying my best congratulations on your really splendid speech. I heard it all, and it was incomparably the best speech in the whole debate. I have heard many great speeches in the House of Lords during the last eighteen years, and I cannot recall that I ever heard anything finer.

"Yours sincerely,

"T. H. S. ESCOTT."

The long and wearisome negotiations, conducted with much patience, tried by occasional breakdowns of temper on both sides, which concluded by the device of an autumn session and the ultimate passage of both Bills, are part of the history of the country. The successful issue was largely due to the personal intervention of the Queen, and the difficulties which she encountered with tact and firmness are fully set out in the collection of her letters.¹

The position which Rosebery had attained in the councils of the party, added to the special weight recognised after his speech in the House, gave him definite *locus standi* in these colloquies. And we find him at 10 Downing Street (July 1st), "determined to try and compromise this silly franchise business. Gladstone very strong for it." Lord Wemyss, the most open-minded and undisciplined of Tories, had put down a motion which proved to be identical with Rosebery's solution, that of an autumn session to deal

¹ Second Series, vol. iii, ch. vi.

with redistribution, the Franchise Bill being permitted to pass now. Gladstone wrote to the Queen favouring Rosebery's idea in principle.¹ Lord Salisbury remained obdurate, and secured Lord Wemyss' defeat by a reduced majority, to the great chagrin of Rosebery, who had told Gladstone that the compromise was sure to win on a vote. But the parleys proceeded, at last good humour reigned, and neither side could boast absolute victory, or had to confess absolute defeat. Later in the year Lord Houghton wrote :

"The Queen told Carlingford that from the way that Gladstone and Salisbury buttered each other, she does not see how she is to have an Opposition again—exactly the reverse of the Duke's difficulty² in 1832."

Her Majesty's fears soon proved to be ill-founded.

Rosebery's other interventions during the summer session were less important. The Secretary for Scotland Bill was dropped in company with other Government measures, after the adverse vote on the Representation of the People Bill, and Lord Salisbury (July 10th) accused the Government of acting like the mediæval Popes, who, when they could not get the thing they liked out of the King, interdicted all the religious services of the inhabitants of his kingdom. Rosebery made the disappointment of Scotland clear by a question on the future of the measure. It did not get an encouraging reply. When Rosebery was in Australia he found opinion highly excited by the reported intention of the French Government to ship an increasing number of habitual criminals, *récidivistes*, to New Caledonia. There was no little risk that escaped convicts might be able to land at points on the thinly populated coast, but, apart from this, Australia objected to the arrival on her shores of time-

¹ *Loc. cit.*, p. 514.

² At the crisis in the fortunes of the Reform Bill in May 1832 the King amazed everybody by inviting the Duke of Wellington to form a Government in order to pass it—in the manner that Catholic Emancipation had been carried three years before.

expired French criminals, some of whom had been guilty of most atrocious crimes. France was still sensitive on Egypt, and this was a delicate matter for our Foreign and Colonial Offices. Rosebery, who had already raised the matter in Parliament, recognised that the Bill then before the French Senate could not be altogether challenged, so he set himself to suggest safeguards which would remove the strongest Australian objections. He enumerated these in a letter to Lord Derby (June 11th); and the outcome was satisfactory enough for him to withdraw a notice of motion which had been on the paper of the House of Lords for some weeks. In doing this he sketched out the general outlines of the story, and professed his willingness to leave the question in the hands of the Foreign Office. Lord Granville explained that urgent representations had been made to the French Government. The scheme was modified, and the substantial service rendered to Australia by their recent visitor was warmly recognised by some of his correspondents, especially in Queensland which had seemed to be particularly threatened. At the end of the month W. E. Forster presided at a Conference on Imperial Federation. Rosebery seconded the first resolution as a declared supporter of the movement. A little later he paid a flying visit to Amsterdam on the Duke of Hamilton's yacht, and went sight-seeing in her launch to Haarlem and other points accessible by canal. The family moved to Dalmeny in August, entertained the Prince and Princess of Wales for the opening of the Forth Bridge, and immediately afterwards received the Gladstone family. Gladstone was oppressed by the dread that the obstruction of reform by the House of Lords might drive the Liberal party to attack the hereditary principle as such, and had sent a note on the subject to the Queen.¹ "Very good and powerful" was Rosebery's observation. The Queen also was greatly impressed by this memorandum. Mr. Gladstone made three successful

¹ *Letters*, Second Series, vol. iii, ch. vi, p. 531.

speeches, the last on September 2nd, when Rosebery also went south. He visited Postwick Hill, near Norwich, a small house which he had lately bought as a residence for a little property which had come into the family by the marriage of the 3rd Earl of Rosebery with the heiress of the Ward family. There he shot partridges, and visited neighbours near Cromer. Felbrigg, the home of the Windhams, always had a particular interest for him. He then returned to Scotland, where he fulfilled a double engagement at Aberdeen.

The meeting of the Trades Union Congress gave an opportunity which he seized with adroitness in a speech of nearly an hour. Henry Broadhurst was largely responsible for his appearance. Starting from what he called the federation of unions in the Congress, he treated it as applicable to the concerns of the Empire. Historically, the notion of making the Empire a single centralised union had failed ; now there was the danger of its having no cohesion at all. The impulse for Imperial federation must come not from Parliaments, but from the people ; that was why he wished to interest this Congress in it. For a united Empire the connection should be a little stronger than the mere practice of sending out Governors and vetoing Bills. Meanwhile France and Germany were both extending their Colonial Empires. In this country the working classes were more interested than others, because both in Canada and Australia these classes had made far greater advances than here in hours of work, in representation in Parliament, and even in payment of members, though this last provision, on which he expressed no opinion, was not altogether approved even in Victoria, which had adopted it. From such experiments we could learn much in this country. Emigration to the Colonies, only about a half of emigration to the United States, had not been carried out by Government with sufficient regard either to employers or employed. But the maintenance of the bond of nationality

touched the Trades Union Congress. This was a practical question which could not be put off from day to day until it might be too late to do anything ; whereas a league of English-speaking peoples, which a later generation might hope to see, was a sublime conception, but not to be achieved in this time. The bond of Empire must either become stronger or weaker ; and to strengthen it must become an article of creed with the working classes both at home and in the Colonies before becoming a question of practical polities.

At this date it showed some courage to devote to hopes and problems overseas almost the whole of a speech made to a working-class audience ; but the frequent applause with which it was punctuated proved the success of the experiment.

On the afternoon of the same day Rosebery received the freedom of Aberdeen, his hat, by a time-honoured custom, being decorated with the diploma and long streamers of red ribbon. Here he dwelt on the rapid growth of cities, and the training they offer for great affairs, as in the case of Chamberlain. There was a shifting of the balance of power away from the country district, and a corresponding weight of responsibility in the towns. He looked forward, also, to local government in the counties and the smaller communities which the counties include, thus freeing Parliament for Imperial work. In Scotland the demand for more local administration was urgent, and they must begin by securing the nomination of a Secretary for Scotland.

The pleasant, varied life at Dalmeny was resumed, but was broken by a mishap. Rosebery rode most days, and one afternoon his hack "came down a burster" a hundred yards from the house, giving him one of the worst of falls, an unforeseen fall on the flat. He broke a collar-bone and also sustained an internal bruise which caused acute pain and prolonged discomfort, compelling the use of powerful sedatives. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone had been invited, but he was

only just able to see them. Other visitors came, but Rosebery remained an invalid, passing most of his time in bed until the whole family moved to London. Another visitor, his brother Everard, he saw for the last time. He and Everard, the "Tiny" of early days, had always been close friends, but never close companions. Everard Primrose, a year younger, inherited many of the qualities which made the union of the Primrose and Stanhope stocks so remarkable in that generation. From Trinity, Cambridge, he joined the Grenadier Guards, and was devoted to his profession. Generally popular, cultivated, ironical, an excellent linguist, and no ascetic, he was the ideal military attaché at such a capital as Vienna, where he was now serving. But he wanted to see active service, and in August Rosebery had asked Hartington to give him a chance in Egypt. He was now soon due to start for the Nile, from which he was not to return.

Lord Spencer came, having been closeted all the morning with Campbell-Bannerman, urging him to accept the Irish Secretaryship vacated by Trevelyan's move to the Duchy of Lancaster.

"While we were talking C-B's answer arrived, refusing: he knew his own capacity, and its limits, etc."

Three days later Rosebery heard that Campbell-Bannerman had revoked his refusal, and, after the move to London, Spencer told him that in spite of this the Government were going to make an effort to get Sir Henry James to take the post. Fortunately nothing came of this. In reply to Rosebery's warm congratulations, Campbell-Bannerman wrote that he was honestly opposed to taking the place, because he did not feel qualified for the work:

"I carried, in truth, the line 'nolo secretari' to the extremest point permitted by honour."

In one respect the change to the south was not a success. The ordinary routine of London, and a visit

to Newmarket, proved to be too exhausting. At the beginning of November the first renewal of his favourite walk of the Derby course, in the congenial company of Henry Calcraft, tired him out. He began to sleep very badly, and to feel languid. Accordingly, when the Prime Minister (November 9th), in the course of a walk at the Durdans, asked him to take the Board of Works, with a seat in the Cabinet, he was not in a mood to accept work immediately. He said that his difficulty was Egypt, and a long talk on other subjects followed. It will be recalled that by the cutting to pieces of Hicks Pasha's force in November 1883, not merely did Egypt lose all hold of the further Sudan, but it was evident that the Mahdi could advance to Khartoum if he wished, and possibly to Wadi Halfa, or even Assouan. It was decided to withdraw the Egyptian garrisons, and in an ill-starred moment it was decided to send General Charles Gordon, of Chinese fame, to carry through the evacuation.¹

The succession of events,—the discussion over Gordon's request for Zobeir Pasha to succeed him as Governor; the fall of Berber in May, and the consequent isolation of Khartoum; the disputes about a relief expedition and its route—all these created an impression of infirmity of purpose in Downing Street. Rosebery could not pretend to be satisfied with his forecast of future Egyptian policy. Mrs. Gladstone warned Hannah Rosebery that refusal to take office might compromise her husband's future, that it would arouse a new rumour of his fickleness which would be encouraged by Harcourt, whereas Lord Granville was really friendly. Two days later Lady Rosebery saw the Foreign Secretary, who dwelt on the extraordinary effort made by the Prime Minister to get Lord Carlingford to resign in Rosebery's favour. Lady Rosebery mentioned Egypt. “Does he want

¹ The despatch of Gordon was decided by Lords Hartington, Granville, and Northbrook, and Sir Charles Dilke, the Prime Minister being at Hawarden. It is safe to assume that Lord Wolseley's unstinted admiration and personal affection for “Charley Gordon” did more than anything else to impel Ministers to this hapless decision.

to seize Egypt ? ” asked Lord Granville, going on to point out that Rosebery would have no responsibility for past policy, and would influence future policy far more from within the Cabinet. The Government could not last long ; good speeches were all very well, but they were not the same thing as official education : Rosebery was none too young for the Cabinet. Soon the offer became known in political circles, and Rosebery received congratulations from John Morley, Dilke, Broadhurst the Labour representative, and others. But he showed Hartington his letter practically refusing, and the grounds of his refusal are best set out in his letter to Lord Granville :

LANSDOWNE HOUSE, November 12th, 1884.

“ MY DEAR LORD GRANVILLE,

“ Your kind and frank conversation with Hannah yesterday encourages me to write to you on a matter personal to myself, even if I did not feel it my duty to you as leader of our house.

“ From the moment that Mr. Gladstone offered me this Commissionership of Works on Sunday afternoon I have felt that I must refuse it. It is not indeed an attractive post, having neither dignity nor importance, and is I think the least of all the offices, being only a sort of football for contending connoisseurs. But if the Pope be *servus servorum* I suppose I may be too. However, this is merely an innocent digression, for I hope you will believe that no personal consideration or silly fastidiousness has anything to do with my feeling in the matter. But Egypt is a great obstacle—I have written to Mr. Gladstone as to this to point out why I think it impossible for me to come in now. Not merely is Egyptian policy to be decided now, and I have never disguised my difference from the Government on that point, but Egyptian finance.

“ You can guess the extreme delicacy of my relation to that question, for though I am not a member of the House of Rothschild, I am allied to it as closely as possible by kinship and friendship, and I feel therefore strongly the difficulty of entering the Cabinet at the moment of the discussion of Northbrook’s Report.

“ As to both policy and finance I could probably accept a *fait accompli* ; but I do not see how with self-respect I could swallow all the considerations and enter now.

"If I disagreed with the conclusion arrived at I could indeed resign. But resignation is almost impossible to me after resigning last year and the resignation of even the humblest member of the Cabinet on such a question could only do harm.

"The consideration alluded to in connection with Egyptian finance would equally prevent my speaking much about Egypt in my present position (I have only alluded to it once in a speech), and on almost all other questions I am so wholly in accord with the Government that I could be of as much use (or as little) to them out as in just now.

"Believe me, dear Lord Granville,
Sincerely yours,
"ROSEBERY."

Two days later he again saw Hartington, and agreed to the Prime Minister's request that the offer should be kept open for a week. In the event it was kept open into the next year, Lord Selborne and other members of the Government encouraging Rosebery with expectations of a favourable development in Egypt. A week was spent at Sandringham (November 24th), when the Prince of Wales, in a frank talk with Lady Rosebery, observed that the post was not equal to Rosebery's claims, and that the Government now needed him but ought to have invited him before. At the same time, patriotism might oblige him to accept it if the country were to be left in the hands of such men as Chamberlain and Dilke. All through the autumn Cooper of the *Scotsman* had been hammering away at the thesis that high office, if offered, must not be refused. But Rosebery must assert himself. When the Prime Minister was going to Scotland for his summer campaign, Cooper wrote to Rosebery (August 11th, 1884) :

"The position is not what it was five years ago. You need not be overshadowed by Mr. Gladstone. You have a position which entitles you to a place of your own. The public will want you, and you can come to their call if it suit you, but you will, I take it, be Mr. Gladstone's host, and in no sense his appendage."

A flying visit to Liverpool followed (December 3rd), with a speech at the Reform Club. Here he first touched on the naval expenditure, in which public opinion, following the lead of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, had put pressure on the Government, and proceeded to speak of Egypt and of British responsibility there. First to the Egyptians, because at Alexandria and Tel-el-Kebir we had destroyed a government, "a very loose and rough government, it is true, and grounded on insurrection, but a government popular and national," and were bound to set up something in its place; secondly, to ourselves, to see that no other foreign nation should take our place. When we depart we must leave a monument of the liberty and civilisation of which we boast. He touched on the settlement of franchise and redistribution, as a prelude to a longer disquisition on reform of the House of Lords, which that House should itself undertake. A seat in the House, he boldly asserted, should not be a matter of hereditary claim. And the new Chamber should be one of the greatest possible simplicity, without fancy franchises, but strong enough to be a real Second Chamber, or they would end by not having a Second Chamber at all.

He made a rush to Scotland for H. M. Stanley's lecture at Glasgow, and a short stay at Dalmeny was interrupted by a summons to Windsor. It was supposed that one or two of the estates near Balmoral might be sold, and the Queen expressed a hope that he would buy one: "We should like so to have you as a neighbour."

In conversation with Princess Beatrice he said that the Queen ought to go to India. The Princess thought that she would but for the long sea voyage.

The rest of the year was spent between Dalmeny and Mentmore. As it was ending, Hartington wrote, enclosing a letter from Gladstone, who had seen the circular which Rosebery had issued to his supporters on House of Lords Reform.

Mr. Gladstone thought that its circulation looked

so like a deliberate plan of separate and continuing action that he asked Hartington to ascertain whether Rosebery's hesitation was really caused by doubts about contingencies in Egypt. If he had definitely abandoned the idea of office, the place had better be filled up at once. In transmitting this letter Hartington said that he did not himself regard the letter to the Peers as indicating any settled plan of separate action. Rosebery, in his reply, confirmed this, and explained that he felt he must pursue the question of reform whether he took office or not. In the former case, the question would at any rate be in proper train for someone else; but if not, he could not find himself at the beginning of the session without having done anything, and without any ostensible excuse for having done nothing.

The new year opened peacefully at Mentmore. Spending a day in London (January 3rd, 1885), he heard that :

“ Mr. Gladstone, who is low and sleepless, dined with Lord Reay the night before, and had said half to himself: ‘ rest will not come to me, but I shall go to it.’ I went to Downing Street and met him in the passage. We talked for two or three minutes: he seemed weary and unhinged. He went to Hawarden after the Cabinet, and if he got any better there is to go to Cannes.”

Jowett and the ever delightful Henry Cowper¹ spent a few days at Mentmore, as did Reginald Brett and “ Jowett's friend Milner,” who in reply to the master's question had written that he would be delighted to make the acquaintance of one with whose views on foreign and colonial policy he greatly sympathised. This was Rosebery's first acquaintance with the young civilian, then only conspicuous as a typical product of Balliol. The “ Colonial Confederation League,” soon to take shape as a regular organisation, was beginning to hold meetings. The position at home grew no clearer. Rosebery showed Hartington the heads of

¹(1836-1887.) Second son of 6th Earl Cowper. M.P. 1865-85.

the letter he proposed to send the Prime Minister in refusing the new offer of the Cabinet (January 28th) :

“ He seemed to concur. But wished to talk to me about his own position. He, H. had a talk with W. E. G. last week as to the break-up of the Liberal party, which seemed to him inevitable. W. E. G. concurred, or rather thought there was too much reason to fear it, but advised Hartington not to resign, if he must resign, on the Egyptian question, a question no one cared a button about.”

He found at Edinburgh that Cooper of the *Scotsman*, to his surprise, concurred in the refusal of office. The letter to Mr. Gladstone was posted on February 1st. He was south again on the 3rd and heard of the conclusion of the temporary agreement with France about Egypt. A day later the news of the fall of Khartoum reached him at Mentmore. Here was a startling aspect of “ the question that nobody cared a button about.” Where Gordon was concerned, “ the nation was in one of its high idealising humours,”¹ and went wild over a truer hero than it has sometimes thought fit to worship. Rosebery saw that for himself the situation had changed : it was no moment to foster personal scruples and reserves. As he had said two years earlier, “ it was all hands to the pumps.”

So he wrote :

Secret. MENTMORE, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, February 8th, 1885.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ Ever since the disastrous news from the Soudan reached me I have felt impelled to write to you : but I waited to be sure of the soundness of my impulse ; while I confess the statement in your letter, which I received the next morning, that your constructive work in Egypt was nearly accomplished ran counter to my strongest convictions in the matter and made me pause again.

“ But the question now is one less of policy than of patriotism. We have to face a crisis such as rarely occurs

¹ *Life of Gladstone*, bk. viii, ch. ix.

in a nation's history, which the nation therefore should face with a united front. The Government at such a juncture has a right to appeal to the public spirit and place under requisition the energies of everybody.

“ If therefore you think that my services can be of any use to the Government you have the right to claim them, and they are fully and freely at your disposal.

“ I cannot disguise from you however that my opinions on the situation in Egypt are unchanged, and that it is for you to judge if under these circumstances I can enter the Government. I cannot profess to alter my convictions in consequence of the fall of Khartoum, but I can offer to put them on one side for the moment in view of a public calamity and its consequences. I do not myself see how I can be of use to you, but that is for you to decide. Moreover you may no longer have any post at your disposal. These however are not questions for me : my only call of duty is plain and simple—to place myself at your disposal in the hour of difficulty and disaster.

“ Believe me,

“ Yours affectionately,

“ AR.”

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL, *February 8th, 1885.*

“ MY DEAR ROSEBURY,

“ I have just received your letter and I highly appreciate the patriotic spirit in which it is written.

“ I believe that the resolutions at which the Cabinet has arrived under the painful circumstances recently made known are such as you would thoroughly approve.

“ When I said that our constructive work in Egypt was so advanced, I did not mean that I thought the time was close at hand when the question of evacuation would come up.

“ The present juncture overshadows all the future : and you would certainly form your own ultimate conclusions on our position in Egypt proper with much greater advantage from within the Cabinet than from beyond its precinct.

“ I therefore from my point of view do not see reason for throwing any difficulty in your way, and as the office is still, happily, open (which to-morrow in all likelihood it would have ceased to be) I will with your permission submit your name to the Queen.

“ I presume that the secondary arrangement for the discharge of business in the House of Commons will hold

good, as you expressed I think a favourable opinion of it on its merits.

“ Unless you telegraph to me to hold my hand I will proceed not later than to-morrow morning.

“ I remain,

“ Affectionately yours,

“ W. E. GLADSTONE.”

February 10th, 1885.

“ MY DEAR ROSEBERRY,

“ The Queen has approved, and is pleased at your accession. Lefevre also joins the Cabinet.

“ I am glad to say that Granville made to me a happy suggestion which I ought myself to have thought of.

“ We propose that you shall hold the Privy Seal¹ with the Board of Works : (salary is attached to the latter only). I think you will like this.

“ Yours affectionately,

“ W. E. GLADSTONE.”

He was able to make a public profession of his duty and the duty of all patriotic citizens when going with Lord Carrington to a meeting at Epsom (February 9th). There he rapidly indicated how moments of disaster in the past had brought out the best in other great nations, and spoke of the heroism of the troops in their magnificent march across the desert. He was shocked at the feeling that the fall of Khartoum should involve the fall of the Government. He did not pretend to have concurred altogether with the Government's Egyptian policy : more than once he had thought that a bolder and clearer course might have been adopted. But in his view every Englishman ought to strengthen the Government in every way he could. He hoped the disaster, if only for a moment, might unite the nation. All Europe was watching to see if we were enervated by our long years of prosperity. The rest of the speech was devoted to colonial policy. He regretted being at issue with Bright, the greatest man but one in the party, who at Birmingham had stigmatised the policy of Imperial Federation as “ *childish and absurd*.”

¹ Making him the fifth personage of the realm, outside the Royal Family.

" I suppose the position of the Imperial Federation League is this. The armaments of this country may have to be increased, in order to afford protection to our coaling stations and our Colonies. In that case the Colonies might wish to contribute, in some form or other, to the support of these armaments ; and the contributions would be raised in any way the Colonies thought fit, whether by a protectionist tariff, or on Free Trade principles.

"It is with regret that I have appeared to differ in the remotest degree from one whom I admire and love so much as Mr. Bright. We cannot be snuffed out by epithets. Much was said about the divergent doctrines held by leaders of the party. The Liberal party was always going to break up but never did. Liberal Cabinets had never been of perfect unanimity. In Lord Grey's Cabinet was Lord Durham. Sir William Molesworth was able to work in harmony with Lord Palmerston, and I do not suppose that Mr. Stansfeld and Mr. Bright were in harmony with all their colleagues."

Perhaps the recitation of these past divergencies, and of their failure to break up the party, would not have been out of place in later years.

The Times reserved its congratulations for the country and for Rosebery's colleagues, rather than for himself, and as letters flowed in, almost all the writers—Ministers, Conservative opponents, Liberals who were next door to opponents—dwelt on his courage and self-sacrifice in lending a hand at such a moment. W. T. Stead, who was so nearly a great man, and yet so definitely failed to be one, wrote:

Private. PALL MALL GAZETTE, NORTHUMBERLAND STREET,
STRAND, *February 12th, 1885.*

"My Lord,

"I hope that the occ. note in the P.M.G. to-night does not jar on the feelings of the Privy Seal.

"I think you have done a right noble act, but I fear that you will have to follow it up by one as noble and even more difficult before six weeks are over.

" Unless I much misread the signs of provincial opinion, Chamberlain will rat and the Cabinet will be exposed to a

frightful strain. But, when the poltroons peel off the patriots will have their chance.

“I hope you will pardon me, for saying that you have an immense chance if you have but stuff in you to play a man’s part in politics instead of merely a politician’s.

“I am almost in despair when I look at our ‘Statesmen.’ What a puny breed they are, compared with Gladstone! What preoccupies our Radicals? England? The Empire? Nothing of the kind. It is the distribution of places when Gladstone goes, this man’s petty ambition, the other man’s personal ends, etc., etc.

“Unless we can rise above all that, block out the Empire as a whole, and think out a policy, colonial, foreign and domestic that will be at once consistent, moral and practical we are undone.

“I shall always at any time be glad to hear from you or to see you.

“And when in my wrath I blaspheme the Ministry, pray consider that my objurgations are framed with a saving clause exempting from their scope the present holder of the Privy Seal.

“Again begging you to pardon the liberty which I have taken in addressing you thus frankly,

“I am,
“Yours truly,
“W. T. STEAD.”

The Master of Balliol, from a more sublime height, said (February 15th) :

“Two persons have asked me whether I thought you ought to join the Ministry in their low estate. I said No to the first, I was inclined to say Yes to the second, but the truth is that both answers might be given with equal reason: for whether it was or was not a mistake to cast in your lot with them at this moment, must depend on the use which you can make of the position. . . .

“Milner tells me of the great pleasure which he had from his visit to you: I certainly think that one of the surest elements of political success is the friendship of young men. No statesman has made a full use of it.”

There spoke the wisdom of age. And among the many letters of that date was one vivid with the

keenness of youth. Laura Tennant, the exquisite girl just affianced to Alfred Lyttelton, wrote :

“ The step you have just taken is, to my mind, one of the noblest things I have lived to see.”

She was not to see many more, for after a short year of wedded happiness her eyes were closed for ever. Rosebery had for long been on terms of close friendship with Sir Charles Tennant and with his family.

He attended his first Cabinet of two and a half hours on the 16th. It is a pleasant custom of Cabinets, sometimes humanizing dull discussions, for Ministers to exchange brief confidences on half-sheets of note-paper. On this occasion Lord Granville tossed Rosebery this query :

“ I wonder what you thought of us all ? ”

The reply was just barbed with recollection :

“ More numerous than the House of Lords and not quite so united.”

A similar note from Lord Northbrook was candid :

“ I think you have joined a very short-lived Cabinet,”

and Rosebery thought that they certainly did not seem very harmonious.

Such was Rosebery’s first entrance to the inner councils of Government. A Minister of the Crown is always *homme enchaîné*, his time is no longer his own ; and in a sense his opinions are no longer his own, for, where no deep principle is involved, he must often subordinate his preferences to those of his colleagues, and he must keep silence out of doors. But one man knows that he is bound by the golden chain of willing service ; another feels that he is bearing an iron yoke imposed by imperious duty. It was the irony of Rosebery’s political life that, gifted as he was with

all the powers and graces apt to lighten the official burden, from first to last circumstances made it uneasy to bear. He just missed the triumphant election of 1868 ; when victory blazed again in 1880, he thought himself debarred from office ; when he felt able to join, the tide was already on the turn. He joined because Scotland needed him, and the work was otherwise uncongenial. To change the metaphor, he was taking a commission in a force distracted by internal differences, and only held together by an aged leader whose health seemed to be breaking down. As the tale progresses it will be seen that never once, during the forty years of his active life, did political office present itself to him dressed in the glowing colours which, for a season at any rate, it ought to wear for a man who entered a Cabinet before he was forty, and was twice Foreign Secretary and once Prime Minister.

Another Cabinet on the following day (September 17th) led to this rather significant observation :

“ I was more accustomed to the abruptness of manner which surprised me yesterday.”

The most interesting subject of discussion was the answer to be sent to the Canadian offer of troops, a memorable step in Imperial relations. This and other offers came up again a day or two later, when “ we succeeded in impressing on Mr. G. the necessity of putting strongly what he had to say about these offers, and he afterwards did it very well.” This was the debate on Sir Stafford Northcote’s vote of censure, when the Government scraped through with a majority of fourteen (February 28th).

CHAPTER VIII

IRELAND : GERMANY : FOREIGN OFFICE

As might be expected, the Left Wing members of the Cabinet, Joseph Chamberlain from 1880 and Sir Charles Dilke from its reconstruction in 1882, were bitterly opposed to special criminal legislation for Ireland ; and Chamberlain had been the principal intermediary when the so-called "Kilmainham Treaty" was contemplated. Rosebery, he knew, was more accessible to fresh ideas than many of his colleagues, and the fact of his being a Scotsman made approaches hopeful, for Scotland also hankered after more local government. But from first to last Rosebery never looked on the claims of Ireland with an eye distracted by emotion or sentiment. To indulge in metaphor—Dark Rosaleen, the wayward and reckless gipsy of those days, never struck him as a particularly romantic figure. He thought her untidy, almost squalid, and rather foolish, compared to his adored Caledonia, inheritress of all the gifts of Pallas Athene. He had never visited Ireland, he did not care for the prime Irish sports, fox-hunting and fishing, and he did not enter into what those acute Irish observers, the chroniclers of the *Irish R.M.*, so well call "the lethargic and pessimistic humour" of a certain type of Irishman, who is "always a critic in the stalls, and is also in spirit behind the scenes." But he saw that there was a complex problem of government to be solved, and he always believed that people have a right to look after their own local affairs, even though in certain respects outsiders might manage them better.

Meanwhile the question of "coercion or no coercion" was becoming imminent. The Crimes Act would expire in August ; was it to be re-enacted, or

maintained in part, or repealed altogether ? The Cabinet was at sixes and sevens. Spencer, the most responsible actor in the piece, demanded retention of some special provisions ; and at last those who would have liked to see the Act disappear altogether agreed to a two-year term for these. But it was found that their agreement was conditional. A Cabinet committee had been considering Chamberlain's proposal for a Central Council or Board on an elective basis, but strictly subordinate to Parliament. This would be above and in addition to county councils, and would take over education, poor law, and other local services, except the police. It was understood that Parnell would accept this, and even assent to some stiffening of the criminal law. There was ample cause to think that the Irish leader might be open to reason. In the early spring (February 25th), after a conversation with the Prime Minister, Rosebery had noted :

“ Mrs. O’Shea, wife of the member, whose relations with Parnell were said to be guilty, whom Mr. G. had seen something of but had now handed over to R. Grosvenor, and who had great influence with Parnell, told Mr. G. that Parnell was a changed man since he had been in Kilmainham, and was now, so far as he dared, on the side of moderation.”

Chamberlain's proposal was submitted to the Cabinet in due course. Gladstone's biographer states : “ All the peers except Lord Granville were against it. All the commoners except Lord Hartington were for it. As the Cabinet broke up, the Prime Minister said to one colleague, ‘ Ah, they will rue this day.’ ” Perhaps he was right, but Rosebery's conclusion was less dramatic. After telling how Chamberlain said he could turn his scheme into a Bill in a week, with the requisite expert help, he noted :

“ No one seemed to like it much, and eventually Spencer and Chamberlain pinned themselves down,—Spencer not to swallow Chamberlain's Bill, Chamberlain not to swallow Spencer's Crimes Bill.”

This being so, it is not surprising to read, two days later :

"There was a severe crisis yesterday. After the Cabinet on Saturday, Mr. G. wrote to Spencer to say he must resign, as no agreement could be come to about Ireland (for he is with Chamberlain, but he will not desert Spencer). All yesterday he was packing up, and pacification was going on, at 7 an arrangement was made, Chamberlain rather giving in in order to preserve the P.M."

But Chamberlain was not the man to accept a rebuff, and it would be a mistake to regard Rosebery as definitely hostile to his plan. At a later Cabinet Rosebery wrote on a half-sheet :

"Would you take a stroll to-morrow morning, or dine quietly to-morrow evening? I am a Scottish home-ruler as well as Irish."

The reply came back :

"Your last remark is most to the point. I had a talk with Cooper the other night and found him in favour of a scheme for Scotland which is exactly my own for Ireland. I suspected that you might have been prompting him. I cannot walk to-morrow, first because I never take exercise, second because I have a Royal Commission. But I will dine with you quietly if I can leave the House."

About the same time he wrote :

Secret.

40 PRINCE'S GARDENS, S.W., *May 17th, 1885.*

"**MY DEAR ROSEBERY,**

"I send you the papers re Local Government in Ireland.

"I need not point out that such a scheme as I propose would be applicable to Scotland and if desired to Wales.

"The letter enclosed from Lord Spencer shows that his opposition has been intensified if not created in the last few weeks.

"I had every reason to hope that he would have assented to the principle.

"The present object of 'the Castle' appears to be to

retain, as much as possible, its existing powers of interference and control.

“ My object is to get rid of everything which is not absolutely essential to the security and integrity of the Empire.

“ It is only in this way that we can relieve an over-burdened Parliament of work which prevents it from giving due attention to Imperial affairs.

“ A small scheme will be a mere sop to Cerberus—stimulating but not satisfying the appetite of the creature.

“ A large scheme would content all reasonable Irishmen, and the agitation for Separation would soon be confined to a mere Rump of politicians without influence or character.

“ My proposal would protect the English taxpayer, now certainly menaced by the demand for bribes of money for all Irish purposes.

“ Nothing will induce me to join another Government, or to meet a new Parliament except as the advocate of some such plan,—failing which I am convinced that a repeal of the Union is only a matter of time.

“ Please return all the papers when read.

“ Yours very truly,

“ J. CHAMBERLAIN.”

It must be observed that while Chamberlain did not contemplate the creation of an Irish Parliament, he meant his scheme to be large, and one to content all reasonable Irishmen.

At a meeting of some Cabinet colleagues Rosebery said that Spencer must write down the irreducible minimum with which he could govern Ireland. By June there was still no complete agreement.

In a general discussion on Ireland (June 5th), Shaw Lefevre, Dilke, and Chamberlain were all against “ Coercion,” and Chamberlain wrote on a piece of paper, “ Can you not give us a lift in this matter? I fancy you agree with us, though I have not liked to ask you your opinion.” Rosebery replied that he was in favour of a strong local government measure, but could not throw over anything which Spencer declared to be the least possible special legislation with which Ireland could be governed. Three days later Spencer made his statement, warning his

colleagues that a considerable part of Ireland would have to be proclaimed when the Act should come into force. There were loud protests, and after "a confused and simultaneous discussion" the question was adjourned. But this particular issue never fell to be decided by the Liberal Government. On the same evening it was defeated by twelve votes on a Conservative amendment to the Budget supported by the Irish members. An interval of some confusion succeeded, since Lord Salisbury was unwilling to take office without either a majority or assurances from the Opposition, while a dissolution was impossible until redistribution had taken effect. Ultimately Lord Salisbury formed his Government on June 24th, 1885.

It will probably be convenient to pursue here the story of Ireland, so far as Rosebery was concerned with it, until the General Election.

In a long talk with Gladstone on his way to Windsor (June 18th), Rosebery, on his way to Ascot, urged the Prime Minister to form a fresh government, either parting with Spencer and those who agreed with him, or with the Ministers opposed to what was falsely called coercion. By forming a fresh Cabinet on whichever principle he might adopt, he would have all the offices at his disposal, and get rid of the existing difficulty. "True," said the Prime Minister, and plunged in thought. But probably he considered that the simplicity of such a procedure was more apparent than real. Had he attempted to carry it out the arrangement of pieces for his game would doubtless have proved to be different from that which appeared on his chess-board the next year.

In a later conversation he said that Rosebery's speech at Edinburgh seemed to indicate greater contiguity to Chamberlain than to Hartington. This was at the meeting of the Midlothian Liberal Association on June 29th, where Rosebery invented a popular formula by stating his willingness to walk under an umbrella with both Gladstone and Bright. He spoke of local government for the three countries as the main

problems for the coming election. To give Ireland real control over her affairs was an experiment which might fail, but at any rate they would be treading in the path on which Liberal Governments had lately proceeded with so much consistency and some success.

“ If we fail, we fail in a good cause, and at any rate we cannot be much worse off than we have been ; but if we succeed, it will be the greatest feat that the Liberal party has ever accomplished.”

By this time the Prime Minister had become convinced that the notion of a Central Board was done with. Rosebery, on his side, had a long talk with Hartington, proposing a meeting of the late Cabinet to try and arrange an agreement. And he attended the banquet given to Lord Spencer as a response to the discreditable attack made upon him by the Irish, and a section of the Conservatives, in the so-called Maamtrasna debate. In the course of that tragic farce John Morley had heard Parnell say, in great excitement, to one of his party : “ This is the greatest thing we have accomplished.” The Radical ex-Ministers did not attend the banquet, and Hartington told Rosebery that he did not believe Liberal unity to be possible, and that the only consideration that prevented him from throwing up the game was that the moderate Liberals would be left without a leader.

In the autumn, at the Paisley Liberal Club, Rosebery delivered a scathing attack on the Tory alliance with the Parnellite party, with scornful disbelief of the Government denials. The Conservative chiefs, he pointed out, held a meeting many weeks before they came into power, and decided that if they had a chance, they would do without exceptional legislation in Ireland. They had no evidence to go on, except what they saw in the newspapers. It was surprising, knowing their utterances, that they were able to meet in a room at all.

"I never heard of any violent assault, though we know that they were in a state of violent and very critical difference, which was only appeased by the sacrifice of Sir Stafford Northcote, who was offered up like the Greek virgin of antiquity, to assist the success of the enterprise. There were frequent outrages in Ireland. But this is the moment at which the Tories decided, with a light heart, not to renew any part of the Crimes Act. While this is the state of matters in Ireland, Lord Carnarvon is engaged in the peaceful duties of a sort of serenade. If he cannot soothe Ireland by dulcet strains no one can. Day by day, year by year, in season and out of season, in bed and out of bed, Lord Carnarvon is engaged in pouring little drops of oil—infinitesimal drops of oil on the stormy waves of Irish wrath and Irish discontent. When the cruet-stand fails he falls back on the Consolidated Fund, and if the British taxpayer does not weary in well-doing neither will he. What is the result? The Irish vote is to be cast against the Liberal party."

With great insight he lamented the effect on many honest members of that party of creating the feeling that it was hopeless to do anything for Ireland. He was right: the majority of the Liberal-Unionist party thus came into being. He went on to deal with Parnell's extended demands:

"What is proposed is this, as I understand, that Ireland should be treated as a colony,¹ and that the Crown should be the only link between Ireland and the mother-country. . . . Is Ireland loyal to the British connection, or is she not? If I had the power, and if I were convinced that Ireland were loyal to the connection with this country, there would be no limits to the concessions that I would offer to Ireland. No demands formulated by Mr. Parnell should appal or deter me if I were sure of that one feature in the problem; no price should be too great to pay for a loyal and contented Ireland. But now, if we had to pay the price, what should we get? We can only surmise; but I am afraid the surmise of everyone in this hall would point in the same direction."

These sentiments are significant, falling from one who could be almost intoxicated by the romance of

¹ As we should now put it, a "dominion."

Australasia, but was chilled to the bone by Parnell's frigid aloofness. They typify the inner sentiments of not a few supporters of Gladstone's policy. A resuscitated O'Connell might have secured Home Rule in 1886.

Rosebery was at Acton Park for a great meeting at Wrexham (October 27th), and "walked with R. Grosvenor.¹ He discoursed on the future Prime Minister. Hartington, Chamberlain, Spencer, Granville, etc., etc., and at length said, but for my age, he should consider me the best ! I burst out laughing in his face."

He was twice at Hawarden, and on the second occasion there was much talk of Ireland. "I told him plainly he could not decline to form a government. 'Am I,' he exclaimed, 'to remain at this work till I drop into my grave ? ' Meanwhile his family has settled the question for him."

The great leader came to Dalmeny in November, and made a series of election speeches which Rosebery was precluded from attending (November 14th). He sent his host "a letter which he had composed yesterday about Ireland, and why (rightly) he will not put a plan before the public." This letter is printed in full in the *Life of Gladstone*.² It sets out the reasons for not accepting Parnell's invitation to frame a plan for Irish self-government, the paramount reason being that its production would concentrate opposition to it and destroy all hope of its adoption.

The Conservative Government from its inception in June 1885 had been pursuing a policy of general conciliation in Ireland. It was the rule that the Lord-Lieutenant should not intervene in debate, but this was broken by Lord Carnarvon who, with Lord Salisbury's countenance, declared that he was prepared to rely on the ordinary law (July 6th). A considerable measure of Land Purchase (the Ashbourne Act) was passed (October 7th). Lord Salisbury's speech at Newport undoubtedly gave the impression

¹ Lord Richard Grosvenor, the Chief Liberal Whip.

² Bk. ix, ch. i, § iv.

of an open mind, with a bias in favour of some sort of central body subordinate to Parliament. On November 21st Parnell's manifesto ordained that the Irish vote in Great Britain should be assured to the Conservative party, and its effect was far-reaching. When the Election came, it was estimated that Parnell's action meant for the Liberal party a loss of forty to fifty votes on a division.¹ Perhaps the impression of Conservative pliability left on the minds of moderate Home Rulers like Rosebery has not been sufficiently recognised.

The headship of the Board of Works had not greatly appealed to Rosebery beforehand. It was not a Ministry of Fine Arts, and its relation to other public bodies, especially the Metropolitan Board of Works, was ill-defined. But during the four months of his tenure, he gave full attention to the work of his office. Herbert Gladstone, now a Junior Lord of the Treasury, represented the department in the House of Commons. It was a period of some movement in the reconstruction of public offices : Dover House, one of the isolated survivals of the days when Whitehall was a centre of fashion, was designated for the Scottish Office, whenever that could be created ; and another, Gwydyr House, brought Rosebery into sharp collision with the Treasury on the question of some minor interior alterations. That department had sent him a blank refusal with the brutality of tone which it sometimes employed. He wrote fiercely to the Secretary :

“ I do not of course question the right of the Treasury to make any order they think fit, but they must find another First Commissioner of Works to execute their behests.”

Herbert Gladstone soothingly intervened with success, and he remained on friendly terms with the Treasury officials. There was a solemn expedition to Aldershot with the Prince and Princess of Wales and

¹ But of course it cannot be asserted that all the Liberals who would otherwise have been returned would have supported Home Rule in the form in which it was finally presented to the House of Commons.

the Duke of Cambridge to choose a site for the huge statue of the Duke of Wellington, removed after much argument from its perch on the arch at Hyde Park Corner. Altogether his recollection of this brief interlude, and of his association with Bertram Mitford,¹ the brilliant Secretary of the Board, was one of enjoyment.

Amid the political distractions of this spring the hand of death made the first gap in the happily united family. Everard Primrose had obtained his desire, and had joined the river column whose march to rescue Khartoum, unavailing as it proved to be, wrote a chapter in the history of the British Empire, of which no tale of endurance or bravery in the Great War has obliterated the memory. At Abu Fatmeh on the Nile he was laid low by enteric fever, the scourge of nineteenth-century campaigns. On Easter Sunday (April 5th) Lord Wolseley telegraphed an almost desperate account, and on Wednesday Everard died. The *Ave atque vale* in Rosebery's journal is in a handwriting broken by emotion :

“ And so I strike the word brother from my dictionary. How hard it is to have been so hopelessly separated from him in this long illness, to have so realised him sinking slowly, homelessly, in the hard, hot glare of the desert sun, caring so much for all the people, and all the things from which he was cut off. We know no details, nor shall we for three weeks at least ; shall we indeed ever know what we want to know ? There is so much that perhaps none can tell. What love, what faith, what sorrow moved him, or was he too feeble for thought ? Farewell, Brother,—word and fact—on this side time. Would that I could fill up the irreparable blank by calling my suffering fellow-men by that name, in action as well as speech, or rather by action instead of by speech. The brotherhood of man is so noble and difficult in action, so silly and easy in mere speech.”

The next days were crammed with political business, but early in the following week he was able to spend

¹(1887-1916.) In the diplomatic service. Secretary H.M. Office of Works 1874-86. Cr. Lord Redesdale 1902.

a night at Battle Abbey, where both his sisters also were :

“A soft, melancholy, and yet pleasing evening,—so much to talk about, so much love and sympathy in the air.”

Everard Primrose was indeed much missed. He was very popular in his battalion, and in the world of Pall Mall, but also in cultivated coteries like that of Holland House, where he was a favourite guest. There were messages from those whose opinions counted. Lord Hartington wrote from the War Office that since he had been there he realised how much was expected of Everard in his profession ; and Lord Lansdowne from Canada :

“He had everything to make life worth living, and he could have taken a prominent place wherever he might have wished to take it.”

One immediate consequence of the bereavement was the abandonment, for the moment, of a visit to Berlin, for which Rosebery had been starting on Easter Monday.

Foreign policy, and especially the relations of Britain with the Great Powers, continued to engage Rosebery’s attention, notwithstanding his preoccupation with Scottish government and the uncertainties that harassed his own career. Most of his speeches showed this ; and now that he was a responsible Minister men began to think of him as an active force in this region of affairs. One friendship certainly contributed towards this impression. At the beginning of 1882 he had asked one of the German Embassy to bring Count Herbert Bismarck to Lansdowne House. The acquaintance, based at first on Rosebery’s intense admiration for the great Chancellor, in time developed into a close friendship. At the end of that season Count Bismarck was enthusiastic for further visits to England. When Rosebery joined the Cabinet his friend wrote warm congratulations,

and may have equally congratulated himself on finding a safe channel for semi-official communications. His father had no liking for Mr. Gladstone or Lord Granville, and the relations between the two Foreign Offices were none too genial. German colonial expansion, especially in Africa, was destined to create friction with us for the next few years. In the spring of this year trouble flared up over the Cameroons.

BERLIN, *February 28th, 1885.*

“ MY DEAR ROSEBERY,

“ I was delighted to receive your kind letter and to hear from you again and I must write you these few lines to express you my very best thanks for it.

“ I quite agree with what you say about the political situation and the English-German relations : the latter ought never to have come to the uneasiness in which to my great sorrow they are now, and I think it would not have been difficult to avoid every sort of ill-feeling on both sides, had your Colonial Office from the beginning shown a little good-will and treated us in the same friendly way, as we always treated England in all political questions up to the last summer.

“ I do not know who is the moving spirit of all the notes that are evidently elaborated in the Colonial Office and pour in here by dozens. If you will take the trouble to read Lord Granville’s note of the 21st inst. about Kameroons you will see that it is not written in a very civil form, I might say next door to rudeness.

“ Lord Granville used to be always so civil and polite, that I hardly can believe he has read that note before he signed it.

“ My father is particularly vexed, that some of his most confidential conversations with Malet¹ have been published without asking him—a proceeding which never yet took place.

“ I am more sorry than I can tell you that you have given up the idea to come to Berlin : we would receive you ‘ à bras ouverts.’

“ Perhaps I can manage to come to England in March or April. I trust I should see you in that case : I deeply regretted that I could not avail myself in autumn of your

¹ Sir Edward Malet, British Ambassador at Berlin.

kind invitation to Dalmeny because of your accident, but I hope it will not be long ere we meet again.

“Please remember me kindly to Lady Rosebery and believe me

“Ever yours,
“H. BISMARCK.”

At Count Herbert's anxious request for an interview Rosebery carried him off to Kensington Gardens, where, after running up against the French Ambassador, M. Waddington, to his amazement, they walked and talked for a couple of hours. Later in the day Rosebery saw Lord Granville, and Bismarck's conversation at the Foreign Office was “stormy and recriminatory.” But on the following day peace reigned, and before Bismarck left for Berlin he and Rosebery had another talk of three hours.

March 9th.—“I took him to the station. He told me that he had shown my letter to his father, who had been greatly pleased by it, particularly by a phrase about the Teutonic race. He pressed me very earnestly to come to Berlin at Easter.”

As has been said, the visit had to be postponed. But meanwhile a complication developed of even more formidable possibilities than any that could arise on the Nile. Russia had annexed an area of Turcoman territory in Central Asia, and a Commission had been appointed to delimit its frontier and that of Afghanistan (March 31st). Suddenly the Russians attacked the Afghan troops at Penjdeh. But before this the situation was menacing, and at a Cabinet on the 23rd the Russian Minister was to be informed that an advance towards Herat would be *casus belli*. It was resolved to take power to call out the reserves. After this firm stand negotiations with Russia went on, but Rosebery's private trouble kept him in the background. It was difficult for the Government to agree on anything.

April 24th.—“Our draft despatch proposing arbitration to Russia came round. I assented, but said I wished to know what our next move was to be. Hartington and Harcourt

objected. So we three, with W. E. G., Granville, Northbrook, and Kimberley met in Mr. G's room at 6.30. Long wrangle. Harcourt, because Kimberley interrupted him, said he had better leave the Government at once. He had never been so insulted, etc. On some other point he said he must resign. Granville protested against the perpetual threatening of resignation taking the place of argument."

The despatch went in a modified shape. Rosebery wrote a strong memorandum on our situation with Russia (April 26th), pointing out that the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the organ of W. T. Stead, which preached conciliation, was not told what the Russians really think, but what they wished to appear in print. While we had been honourably negotiating Russia had been grabbing, and we might find ourselves accepting a frontier condescendingly offered by those who had no right to be there at all. The effect of weakness on India and Afghanistan would be deplorable, and no better in the West.

"All Europe is laughing at us, our nose has been pulled all over the world. Throughout next week we shall be undergoing the process with France. Our Government smiles over it, and thinks it is not humiliating. But it *is* humiliating. And they further say that we are so strong we can afford it. But are we so strong? Nations with armies of two millions do not consider us strong."

But he was preaching to the partially converted. A few days later the Prime Minister asked for a credit of eleven millions. On May 2nd news came that Russia had accepted the principle of arbitration, and the chief danger was at an end.

Not the least important element in the Russian business was its repercussion on Egyptian policy. After the failure to rescue Gordon the Government left further advance to Khartoum to Lord Wolseley's discretion, but in no case could a push be made before autumn. There was some feeling that at any rate Khartoum should be retaken to satisfy national honour, the reconquest of the Soudan being left an

open question ; but meanwhile a force was to be dispatched to Suakin, to crush the elusive Osman Digna. This was done, but the situation on the Indian frontier, and our apparent friendlessness in Europe, seemed to render impossible the locking up of any large force in Africa.

A long speech at the meeting of the National Reform Union at Manchester (April 1st) was mainly devoted to the Soudan. At this distance of time it would be wearisome to reiterate details of a policy which at the time aroused deep passion on both sides. Rosebery offered a closely argued defence of Government action both on the Nile and on the Red Sea. To this audience he had to exculpate his colleagues from the charge of needless slaughter of unoffending Arabs quite as earnestly as to vindicate their care for the national honour. The Liberal party, then as afterwards, attracted men of opinions not less definitely opposed than those of Palmerston and Cobden when it came to fighting or a threat of fighting. Touching on the Central Asian difficulty, he doubted the applicability of arbitration to the particular case. As a matter of fact, he was never a fanatical devotee of arbitration in itself, believing, as many sensible people have, that it is a poor second-best to agreement reached through argument and conciliation. At the close of his speech he was able to slip in some phrases on Imperial federation, using as his text the offers of military aid received from Australia and Canada. He defended the advocates of federation from the charge of not having produced an actual plan. The idea must first soak into the minds of people here and in the Colonies :

“ The maintenance of Empire—though I believe that Empire means the girding of the world with a broad belt of British populations which shall ensure the maintenance of peace—demands self-sacrifice and exertion.”

Lord Hartington had been in hot water with Windsor Castle over various actions or derelictions

of the War Office. This seemed unfair, for he had never been in favour of retirement from the Soudan, and as they took Rosebery's favourite exercise of "walking the course," he announced his determination to resign. Rosebery pointed out that he could not choose a worse opportunity. Two Cabinets followed, and Rosebery sent Hartington a careful memorandum on the subject. In this he fully and ingeniously stated the arguments on both sides, reaching the conclusion, not that we should hurry away or abandon our plans, but that we should concentrate our forces and modify our plans.

"This would meet all your strongest arguments, satisfy our consciences, and maintain the honour of the country."

Next day the opposing views were compromised, partly because both Lord Wolseley and Sir Evelyn Baring had modified theirs, so that the resignations of Hartington and Childers, Chancellor of the Exchequer since 1882, were averted. It is not uninteresting to speculate what would have been the effect on the party fortunes of a break-up on this question in 1885, in place of that which marked the following year. Possibly there would have been but little difference in the long run. The Queen was greatly disturbed by the decision of the Cabinet, as appears from her correspondence. Sir Henry Ponsonby wrote to Rosebery asking for his opinion, and the reply is given in full in the Queen's *Letters*.¹ He was morally in a strong position, for he had no responsibility over the earlier steps taken, and he made out a good case for the present policy as the choice of the least of great evils. Ministers went on threatening resignation on one subject or another. Defeat was in the air, and some thought it would be better to be beaten on a minor Government proposal rather than on the Budget, thus avoiding a public break-up over Ireland. Once, when the Chief Whip did not seem to be

¹ Second Series, vol. iii, ch. vii.

enjoined to exercise his duty with the utmost zeal, Rosebery felt bound to remind his colleagues that they appeared to be contemplating a course of conduct which on the Turf would bring them under the notice of the Jockey Club. But before the curtain fell, Rosebery was able to pay his visit to Berlin. It was no Government mission, but he had to be primed for the coming conversations, and his packet of information was not entirely made up of sugar-plums. A farewell talk with Gladstone, in a harassed mood over personal questions and more resignations, only elicited the remark that in the Denmark affair he had discovered Bismarck to be a liar. The Foreign Office was more formal. Rosebery was given a Memorandum, largely in Lord Granville's own hand, covering the particular points at issue. It opened with the complaint that while Prince Bismarck professed that his relations with the British Government are now of a perfectly satisfactory character, the actions of German representatives are almost uniformly unfavourable to us. In the matter of the Egyptian loan they had perpetually hampered agreement on the Convention. On the Suez Canal Convention the German delegate almost always supported the French view; on the Afghan Frontier Question, it was believed that Prince Bismarck had urged Russia to stand firm. The German attitude in Turkey had throughout been disadvantageous to us. He was also furnished with papers on the African colonies, touching some of the questions which Lord Salisbury was to handle six years later.

Travelling by Flushing, Breda, and Hanover, twenty-five hours brought him to Berlin (May 22nd) in time for supper with Herbert Bismarck at the Radziwill Palace, a splendid house, nearly all reception-rooms, so that Rosebery put up at a neighbouring hotel. After some sight-seeing, he was presented to the great Chancellor at luncheon, and had an hour and a half tête-à-tête in the garden afterwards. Dinner at six, and then "hot political talk" with

Herbert Bismarck Unter den Linden for a like period. It was more natural to pour out Foreign Office grievances to the son than to the illustrious father in a first conversation. The next morning Baron Bleichröder called at the hotel.

“As he was talking, the door opened, and George with an alarmed countenance ushered in Prince Bismarck, for all the world like Leporello and the Commendatore: he was very gracious and sat till 12.30.”

In after years, Rosebery was fond of saying that the only two people who had thoroughly frightened him were Queen Victoria and Prince Bismarck. No doubt that was true, for his shyness, and he was very shy, was not of the sort that makes a bogey of an individual. It was Queen Victoria’s birthday, and though he had been excused from dining with the Crown Prince and Princess at Potsdam, he was asked for late tea (which proved to be a substantial meal) and to stay the night. He revelled in the beauty of Frederick the Great’s Neues Palais, was taken to Sans Souci for a drive in the country, and over the Palace—

“Great complaints of the Princess not being allowed to arrange and preserve, and the Palace offices turned into barracks,”

—and so back to Berlin.

Bismarck’s talk about Sedan, etc., was incomparably interesting, on public affairs there was an atmosphere of good-will, and the marked personal liking which Rosebery awakened in Berlin was soon to stand him in good stead. He and Herbert Bismarck set off for The Hague (May 26th). He spent a day at that delightful spot, and reached home via Brussels, to unfold his budget of information at the Foreign Office. He felt some difficulty in doing this, writing :

“There is indeed something intensely repugnant to me in being a man’s guest and writing down his careless utterances like an interviewer, and I only did it under the impression

that no eye but my own would ever see the non-political part. I almost feel as if I were doing something ungentlemanlike even now, but I would rather risk this than the impression which seemed upon you in the House of Lords that I was trying to conceal or hold back anything. I cannot, however, forget that the Chancellor spoke to me in his own phrase 'as one gentleman to another,' and I feel certain that you will not allow any other human being to see my notes."

In less than a fortnight the Government fell, and after all on the Budget.

June 9th.—“Government were beaten last night by 12. 252 to 264. Amid cries of ‘Foxy Jack’ from Parnellites. Cabinet at noon. All in high spirits except Mr. G. who was depressed. He began by saying anxiously that he would like to have announced that the Cabinet had come to agreement about Ireland, but unless he is now told there is such agreement he must take the reverse for granted. No one speaking, he proceeded to the result of the division. There was no question as to reasoning with anybody. . . . I asked if we could not resign by telegraph,¹ which horrified Mr. G.”

A moment of peace followed. At Mentmore he drove about, and sat out and meditated, thinking that he had never seen the place looking so beautiful. Then came Ascot, with a strong reminder of Berlin :

“The Prince of Wales at once took me aside and gave me a long confidential letter from the Crown Princess to read. She said that there had been a dead set made at her in Berlin at the time of her marriage, and that it had never entered Fritz’s head to think of doing without Prince Bismarck should he survive his father. It was so interesting and confidential that she ended by adjuring the Prince to burn it. The Prince in reply announces his intention of specially preserving it, and the fact of his having shown it to me.”

The following week came the farewell to office at Windsor, and the return of seals :

“When I went for my audience the Queen was alone with the Prince of Wales, and only said ‘I am very sorry to take them from you, Lord Rosebery.’”

¹ The Queen was at Balmoral.

Possibly all the holders were not so pleasantly dismissed.

Though out of office, Rosebery moved the second reading of the Secretary for Scotland Bill in the House of Lords (July 9th). It was almost the sole survivor from the late Government's programme, and could now be treated as sailing into harbour. The most striking new feature of the measure was the assignment to the new Minister of control over education, and this produced much discussion in its later stages. The outcome was not exactly as Rosebery desired, but he was able to note, as it were with a sigh of relief, "Secretary for Scotland Bill through at last." A month later he met the Duke of Richmond abroad and heard of his having accepted the office. Lord Salisbury had shown no enthusiasm for the measure, but desired to give the office a good start by appointing a Minister of the first class, recently Lord President of the Council, so Rosebery was well content.

The Duke of Argyll and Rosebery, two loyal Scotsmen, two sensitive spirits, and two eloquent voices, could seldom see eye to eye. Rosebery's Edinburgh speech of June 29th had somehow excited the elder man's wrath, with the result that—

"the Duke of Argyll made a long *omnium gatherum* speech [June 10th] in which he dealt so much with my Edinburgh speech that I had to get up after him, and having nothing to say spoke quite inconceivably ill. However I am sure it is profitable to make a bad speech, it teaches one so much."

For an unprepared rejoinder, the speech does not deserve so harsh a verdict, and at the time it was reckoned as a success. He was candid on the portentous indictment which the Duke had drawn against his former colleagues, and on the lack of fairness manifest in his attacks on individual Ministers. The phrasing was less distinguished than in some of Rosebery's considered efforts, but was by no means inadequate.

The Roseberys went to Homburg for a mild cure which, for him, included fairly regular lawn-tennis,

until in the fierce heat it was impossible to hit a ball, and some elementary German lessons. Princess Bismarck was staying there, and Herbert Bismarck was often over, to retail the current political gossip. There were frequent visits to Frankfort and raids on the choice curiosity shops there.

The early autumn was spent at Mentmore with a come-and-go of friends (September 3rd).

“ John Morley and I took a walk : he confesses to a certain weariness of politics. I triumph over him as always hating them.”

Another guest was Prince George of Wales, who arrived from duty at Portsmouth. Rosebery went for a day or two to Hawarden.

“ Discussion at breakfast on correspondence : Mr. G. said peers did not know what it was. He averaged 100 letters a day (received) during the Bulgarian agitation. I retorted that he encouraged it, that he never received a volume of bad poetry without writing a long letter in reply, and that he was an easy prey to crafty autograph hunters.”

After his return to Mentmore Goschen was a guest, and Rosebery told him that he would make a fatal mistake if he did not join the next Gladstone Government, for it was unfair to leave Hartington to fight alone the battle of the moderate Liberals. Whatever split might take place later, Goschen would be stronger for having served under Mr. G. for that time. It was eleven years since he had been in office, and it was doubtful whether Hartington would join without him. Goschen seemed to be impressed by these arguments, but later influences prevailed against them.

The sorrow that had stricken the family in the spring found a certain counter-weight in the marriage of Lady Mary Primrose to Henry Hope of Luffness, which took place at Raby in October. She had been the popular daughter and deputy hostess of that house and of Battle Abbey since she grew up. It was

an alliance with a Scottish neighbour which gave pleasure to the whole circle of her relations.

During this autumn of opposition in 1885 no hostile critic could accuse Rosebery of shirking his share of the party burden. Besides the great Paisley meeting,¹ during October, November, and December he addressed Liberal meetings at Reigate, Sheffield, Slaithwaite, Wrexham, Bo'ness, the Scottish Liberal Club, and Glasgow. Some of these speeches dealt with Ireland or with foreign affairs, as has been described, and in most of them the chord of Imperial responsibility and Liberal Imperialism was firmly touched. At Reigate (September 20th), something of a Tory stronghold, he had the unusual experience of speaking through a fire of interruptions. There was much banter of the Government; but in the more serious passages of the speech, he preached against the excessive hours of labour in some occupations which trades unions could not protect. Girl dressmakers were a notable instance of this; but the hours of railwaymen, stretching sometimes to as many as twenty, were a personal injustice and a public danger. He was not much enamoured of socialism, but if it, or any other "ism," would help, he would not disdain to borrow from that science. The system sapped the life of the men and, putting corporal punishment aside, no greater sufferings existed under negro slavery.

Just a month later (October 20th), at Sheffield, he developed this theme at greater length in that centre of trades-unionism. After his former speech, he said, he had been styled a coroneted socialist, but he had never seen a coronet in his life, and doubted whether the socialists would welcome him as a fellow-labourer, but he firmly believed that the hours of railway servants were a public scandal, and that there might be a case for legislation assuming that trades-union power was not effective. He compared the eight-hour day he had seen in force in Australia. In view of existing controversies, it is curious to note that,

¹ Pages 228-9.

after expressing a favourable opinion on state-aided emigration as a relief to unemployment, he added that he did not propose to consider that night the solution offered by some artisan clubs in working-class centres, where the question was treated from the Malthusian point of view.

Soon afterwards he was at Slaithwaite, the West Riding town whose name remains the despair of those born south of the Trent. There he discussed, for the first time in public, the land, which Chamberlain's condemnation of landowners, migration to the towns, and the fall in the price of wheat had placed in the forefront of current questions. It is a fact worth noting, since it seems to exhibit one of the contradictions of his character, that Rosebery took little direct part in the ordinary interests of a landowner. He had early inherited a large estate in the Lothians—that Mecca of high farming ; at his marriage he stepped into ownership of a wide pasture domain in the Vale of Aylesbury, to which he and his wife added materially. He rode around the countryside, and was always happy with a gun. But he never made any study of agricultural details, and had no enthusiasm for the various crops and live-stock of a farm, though he owned a first-class herd of Scotch-bred shorthorns, and when fresh varieties of disease-resisting potatoes were being evolved, the Dalmeny home farm produced one of the most famous. He liked talking with most specialists and picking up their knowledge ; but those “whose discourse is of the stock of bulls,” as the Revised Version has it, did not appeal to him. Even with the thoroughbred stock to which he was so much attached, his verdicts always seemed to be rather those of the skilful outside critic than those of the born stableman.

Here in Yorkshire he spoke up for greater distribution of interests in the land, for the abolition of the law of primogeniture and of all entails save marriage settlements ; for the simplification of transfer, so that land should pass as easily as consols ; and for a

myself all day with my speeches without the slightest effect."

The three Scottish speeches were made in the atmosphere of the General Election ; two of them in its approaching shadow, the third after the results were declared. At Bo'ness, the port on the Firth of Forth, he opened a Liberal Club (October 31st), and after congratulations on the Scottish Secretaryship and Scottish education, he devoted most of his speech to a plea for Liberal unity. Mr. Gladstone's manifesto (addressed to the country through the electors of Midlothian) did not pretend to exhaust the future ; but any Government, whatever its complexion, would be face to face with Parnell's ultimatum. It could not be ignored ; if they meant to comply with it, it would be because its demands were just, not because it made them tremble. But they found Liberal members at each other's throats, because this or that man did not pledge himself to this or that particular reform.

" There are many causes with which I sympathise from the bottom of my heart, though I do not think this is the moment for saying so—many causes from which I may be supposed to hang back just now—causes to which I may be considered a laggard at this moment. I quite admit that I am a laggard on the present occasion as regards some of these, because I see a greater danger before me.

" What does it avail me to keep an outlying position if I find on my return that my camp is in the hands of the enemy ? What is it to me to carry out any of those great reforms which Mr. Gladstone does not consider pressing—and his judgment is surely as good as yours or mine—if I find that in promoting these reforms I have left everything—Church and State, Parliament and Government—at the mercy of a dictator, who openly avows his hatred of each and all ? "

This was not the language of a timorous Whig. And dread of an Irish dictatorship in Parliament was never more strongly expressed than by his leader in the hundred times quoted speech of November 9th.

The same evening at Grangemouth, the neighbouring rival harbour to Bo'ness, Rosebery developed the same theme, begging for a united Liberal party in Scotland.

On November 13th the Scottish Liberal Club presented Rosebery with an address. The Gladstones were at Dalmeny, and electioneering had begun, but such an occasion was not an infringement of the rule banishing Peers from the scene. Rosebery kept away from the regular meetings. It was a dull November day :

“ Low about my speech. But took a long walk after luncheon and it came all right. The banquet to me came off this evening. It was very splendid. The electric light was used in the Music Hall for the first time.”

He received many congratulations on this speech of forty-five minutes, but as a matter of fact it does not read as vividly or freshly as many others. No doubt he was hampered not so much by Mr. Gladstone's presence as by the knowledge that in a sense he was a spectator, not a combatant in the ranks.

The Midlothian poll, with its vast majority for Mr. Gladstone, compared with the modest 211 of 1880, was disclosed on November 27th.

“ We drove into Edinburgh to the Rosebery Club meeting, which Mr. Gladstone addressed, and I afterwards for a moment. Then to the Corn Exchange, where I in the Chair. Speech for thirty minutes. Mr. G. for forty minutes. Somehow I felt the whole thing melancholy. We took him to the station. I was a good deal mobbed coming out and going home.

“ To-day struck me as very sad, I know not why. Mr. G. was older, feebler, less victorious by much than in 1880 if victorious at all, and somehow one felt as if one were witnessing the close of that long and brilliant career. Several of our party wept at the Rosebery Club Meeting.”

Many borough elections in England had gone against the Liberals, so that Rosebery could utter no note

of triumph except for the Scottish Secretaryship and for the "great national thanksgiving for the health and strength and the personal triumph of our great Chief."

Glasgow had returned her full complement of seven, all Liberals, and Rosebery went to a great meeting there (December 4th), with Campbell-Bannerman and other Scottish members. In the last Parliament there had been fourteen Liberals from Ireland, to-day there was not one. It is not surprising that Rosebery denounced the ingratitude thereby shown to Gladstone. "No man who ever lived had done one-twentieth of what he had done to right the wrongs of Ireland. The new Parliament was a rickety infant that could not live long, and Scottish Liberals must make ready for an early dissolution."

In the midst of this series of speeches, Rosebery, always critical of himself, was anxious to know whether practice was bringing about its due result. George W. Smalley, an American publicist of high standing, spent a great deal of time in Europe, and was thoroughly conversant with politics and politicians both in England and abroad. Rosebery and he corresponded frequently, and on this occasion he was asked for his judgment on the recent efforts.

November 9th, 1885.

"A very great improvement. The change was marked after your return from Australia. You must be aware what a different impression you have since made on the public. Before that, people thought your speeches clever, but the tone of them hardly that of a man who had flung himself into public life body and soul with serious purposes and a settled resolve. You did not always seem quite sure of yourself. A speech in those circumstances may be brilliant but scarcely impressive. I do not think you then had with the public the weight to which your abilities and sincerity entitled you. The place you have since taken is very different—I am speaking of the English public, not Scotch—and I should say the English are now coming round to the Scotch view, and coming rapidly. The recent series of speeches in England I think far stronger than any you have before made, and the effect

on the public mind is in proportion to the thoughtfulness, the definiteness of aim, and the power of statement which characterise them. But I still say you have never done, on a given occasion, quite so well as you might, simply because of a want of an absolute completeness of preparation. You trust, as you have a right to, to your gift of thinking on the legs, but except in debate I consider that improvisation ought to be mainly confined to diction. That the substance and order of a speech ought to be fully thought out in advance and the different parts *fused* into a whole. A man in your position, with your career before him cannot take too much pains. You have the natural gifts; whether you are to be a speaker of the highest order depends wholly on the amount of trouble you are willing to take. There are parts of the Bo'ness speech which, from another point of view, are better than anything before. There is passion in it, in the oratorical sense, and such an expression of strong feeling as you seldom allow yourself. Don't be afraid of letting yourself go. There was a passage in the Dumfries (Burns) speech admirable in a different way, because equally suffused with genuine sentiment, picturesque and imaginative also. Now the public judges a man by his ordinary performance, by his average, and rightly, but when it is a question of what a speaker *can* do, the test is to be found in the best he has hitherto done. Those are the passages which tell you what is to be hoped for from him, and what flights he may be expected to take hereafter. You keep Bright in mind, and you know his method, and there is none better. You must have observed how his orations flow from end to end with an unbroken current. No man ever prepared more carefully, and no man ever seemed to speak so easily and simply."

This judgment by a skilled observer from the land of orators, a man of wide general experience, may be taken as a sound appreciation of Rosebery's speeches throughout the ten years during which he considered himself tied to political life.

Soon after the Glasgow expedition a summons to Hawarden arrived. Lord Spencer came at the same time. Rosebery urged his host to call a party meeting: "This he always hates." The leader's view was simple. He would support the Tories if they could come to agreement with Parnell. Otherwise they

should be opposed at once ; this by a vote of want of confidence without reference to Ireland ; if Ireland must be brought in, it must be not by Parnell, but by the Liberal leaders. At present he leaned to proceeding by resolution. The other subject was destined to affect Rosebery personally :

“ I had a talk with Mr. G. about Granville, as to whom he opened out to me. He fears G. wishes to return to the Foreign Office. Mr. G. appears to know that this is inexpedient.”

Two days later (December 9th) he was warned by telegram that an important letter was coming. It proved to contain the wish that Rosebery should see Labouchere, enclosing a letter from him, with extracts from a letter from a leading Irish Member of Parliament. Rosebery felt he could not but comply, but said he did not know how far Labouchere was to be trusted and that Parnell at any rate was not to be trusted.

Henry Labouchere was a cadet of a distinguished family of Huguenot origin. His uncle, Lord Taunton, had left him (unwillingly, it was said) a considerable fortune, to which he had been able to add largely by judicious dealings on the stock exchange. Diplomacy, in which he had started, had proved to be too cramping for his careless independence, and he had taken to politics, sitting for Northampton as an extreme Radical. With Dilke, and other members of a small group, he was one of the evangelists of republicanism on the French model. This rather crude conception of a bourgeois republic is as extinct here to-day as Jacobitism ; but fifty years ago it represented a distinct type of public opinion, before Socialism had obtained a footing in England. Labouchere was also the proprietor of the weekly journal *Truth*, which, while freely purveying social gossip, also did good service by exposing fraudulent money-lenders and other malefactors. Mr. Gladstone neglected no genuine current of opinion, however divergent from his own,

and thought that Labouchere, who was in close touch with the Irish members, might be serviceable. From Queen Victoria's letters it can be seen that, in the view of Windsor Castle, he was nothing but a desperate revolutionary. Labouchere was genuinely cynical ; but in public life he credited everybody, including himself, with the basest motives to a degree that became almost wearisome. He was always the centre of a circle in the House of Commons smoking-room. One day, after a speech of Mr. W. H. Smith's, he said thoughtfully : "It is sad to see how that good old man has learnt to lie ; he will soon be running our Old Man hard." Everybody laughed, but neither the character of Mr. Gladstone nor that of the Conservative leader suffered materially. As a matter of fact, Labouchere was a kind and generous man, free with his money in cases that appealed to him. Where he did good by stealth he did not blush to find it fame, because he never blushed ; but he was assiduous in showing that it was not really good at all, but something quite different. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain told me that once when Labouchere had been caught out befriending some unlucky person, at no little trouble and cost, he set himself to explain that he had thus purchased a useful tool who could be used without shame or scruple. If it could not be said that he touched nothing that he did not adorn, he certainly made everything seem amusing. Rosebery had long known Labouchere as the agreeable playmate of an idle hour ; so long ago as 1871, he, Francis Knollys, and another had joined Labouchere in giving dinner at the Star and Garter to the Royalty actresses, Miss Hodson and three others. Miss Hodson, in the course of her brilliant stage career, had already become Mrs. Labouchere.

Now there was sterner business on hand. Labouchere had told Herbert Gladstone that if anything was to be done, a definite programme must be put before Parnell, "Otherwise, he will maunder about Grattan's Parliament, of which he knows nothing." There was

some hurry, because the Tories would make every effort to capture Parnell, whose tendency would be to shilly-shally, and for the time to agree to nothing. Labouchere's Irish correspondent, who had not seen Parnell for over a fortnight, was extremely candid about his chief's limitations and peculiarities. He concluded :

“ In my deliberate opinion Mr. Gladstone is the only man who can settle the Irish question. He is the only man with hand and heart for the task ; the only man who can reduce to decency the contemptible wretches who so largely compose the Liberal party. I thank God that so many of the howlers and gloaters over our sufferings have met their fate.”

But the Liberal leader was wary. He drew up a note pointing out that the Tories and Nationalists had been in alliance for years, that the Government of the day should bring in a measure at once, which would receive fair play from the Liberals. Liberals might put out an outline of essentials, but a plan could only be carried by a Government. It will be seen that the prospect of a Liberal Government, though not explicitly indicated, was not ruled out, and Rosebery was told that he might go a little farther with Labouchere. When they met on December 12th, Rosebery repeated his extreme aversion from negotiation with Parnell at this stage. But the talk was not purely political. Labouchere was intimate with Randolph Churchill, and was full of gossip about him, and also about Dilke, who had become involved in unhappy scandal earlier in the year. Rosebery was in Scotland till almost the end of the year. While there, he received half a dozen letters from Labouchere, some of several pages, with inimitable stories of the negotiations. How Parnell had disappeared “ with an Egeria of some kind,” and his colleagues were hunting for him ; how some days later they believed that he had “ retired to warm salt water baths with a new Egeria, they did not exactly know where ” ; how Lord Carnarvon had told Justin MacCarthy that he was in favour of a large measure of Home Rule

but the party would not hear of it, so would the Irish accept an inquiry ? how this was considered simply a trick to remain in for six months, and how Randolph Churchill called Carnarvon a damned traitor ; how the Hawarden proposals remained full of ambiguities ; how " Joe " was furious over the newspaper revelations which afterwards became known as the Hawarden Kite, and at the Irish preferring " Short " Gladstone to " Codlin " Chamberlain ; how the Irish party wanted a Royal Viceroy, to be advised, Labouchere hoped, by a Privy Council containing a number of Liberals and some Irish ; how a leading Irish member, quite seriously and with tears in his eyes, had told of the beautiful loyalty of his supporters, instancing one who, on his deathbed, had adjured his son to impersonate him at the coming election, and how the son had shown equal loyalty by doing it ; and finally how utterly unlike English Liberals these Irish were.

Rosebery was in London at the end of the year, seeing Hartington, who said he would not join Mr. Gladstone's Government, and asked Rosebery to come to a meeting, which he declined to do.

" Then Harcourt, furious with Mr. Gladstone, talking of ' lying ' etc., full of pique : he says Mr. Gladstone's experiment must now be tried, though it is insane folly. I said to him that it would be awkward for him to sit by Mr. Gladstone and defend it. ' Oh, but I should not go back to the Home Office,' which remark, if it means anything, must mean that he would also leave the House of Commons, but he would not get the Woolsack for all that.

" Washed all this sort of thing out of my mouth by going to the Lyceum and seeing *Faust*. Irving at his best. Went and saw him."

At the same time he received from Lord Spencer the following avowal :

ALTHORP, NORTHAMPTON, December 30th, 1885.

" MY DEAR R.,

" You hate compliments of the season, but as I cannot omit them for Lady R.'s sake, I at once get over this stumbling

block, and wish her and you a very happy new year, well out of all disagreeable Home Rule in public and private.

“ I have been meditating a letter for some days, as I feel that you and I will be looked upon by ex-colleagues as co-conspirators in aiding and abetting the G.O.M. in his wickedness.

“ Since we parted, as you may suppose, I have been in the thick of the controversy.

“ I never felt so disgusted in my life as I was by the *Standard* and *Pall Mall*, not to say Leeds revelations.

“ The letter to the travelling Artist was bad enough, but my hair well-nigh bleached when I read the disclosures. I have the shrewdest suspicion that it came from Herbert.

“ I doubt whether Mr. G. even winked at what was done, but he was too loyal as a parent to raise his hand against the indiscretion of the infant H——s.

“ Of course some will say it did good by showing what the feeling in England really was. But to my mind it did much more harm. It upset the whole of the sensitive Irish, such as Police and R.M.s. It threw distrust among colleagues, raised a storm in the London Press urged on by the monied men who I fear have 100 millions lent on land in Ireland. All this turned back the commencement of concession among Irish Tories who had begun to say ‘ This tension is intolerable, terms must be made, the sooner the better.’

“ But to what is more serious. As far as I can judge, you and I, and I know not whether you still hold the views you did at Hawarden,—you might well have gone back from them—will stand alone among Mr. G.’s colleagues. Possibly Lord G. will follow Mr. G. but I know of no one else inclined to do so. We three peers and John Morley could not form a Gladstone Government, and at present I see no prospect of Mr. G. getting a following enough to justify his going on.

“ The question then is, ought he to join the Home Rulers with his voice and support them, or ought he and those who may agree with him to keep silence, lest Ireland should become ungovernable. I cannot yet answer this to my satisfaction.

“ I fancy that Mr. G. would like to move an amendment on the Address clear of the Irish question, if it is shown that government stand unsupported by the Irish.

“ I look on that as impossible without facing the next question, can he with his views form a government?

“ There is a great deal against having a meeting of the ex-

Cabinet, but it is essential that Mr. G. should see and talk to leading members of that body. I hope he will move towards London next week. This is essential before he settles anything. After all the Tories may take the thing up, what a blessing if they could !! I still hold to the necessity of guarantees, but I think, they could be got. Underlying all this how odious (and maybe wicked) it is to think that Parnell and his crew are to govern Ireland. I have personal difficulties about contact with them, but I need not say anything about these at this stage. I expect that unless the Tories act, all will end in smoke.

“ Yours sincerely,
“ SPENCER.”

At the dawn of the new year, Rosebery, through no conscious effort beyond increased activity in speech-making, and by the aid of no dramatic incident, had become in a real sense a central figure in the Liberal party. Mr. Gladstone's authority was supreme and unquestioned except so far as his reiterated intention of resigning had impaired it : it was now assumed that he would remain until the Irish Question was out of the way. But he was almost twenty years senior to most of his colleagues, and far ahead of all in official experience and prestige. So he could not be the confidant of their hopes and fears. Rosebery's letter bag, since his return from his tour, had been filled to bursting with such confidences. With the Gladstone family he held a special place. Not only Gladstone himself, but Mrs. Gladstone and Mary Gladstone, whose happy marriage was celebrated about this time, were continually writing to him. And he was in regular communication with Granville, Hartington, Harcourt, Goschen, John Morley, Dilke, Chamberlain —men at the opposite poles of opinion, but all prepared to put trust in his judgment and his sympathy. And it was not only that he was charming and receptive. He did in reality occupy a central position, as Gladstone himself did in a different way, between Whigs and Radicals, and at this time he attracted both equally. Perhaps he was touching now the true

zenith of his political influence. There was as yet nothing to awaken jealousy or hostility in the minds of any section of the party.

The understanding between Conservatives and Irish had not survived the election at the close of 1885, with its figures of 251 of the former and 85 of the latter against 333 Liberals of all shades. There were no common convictions or common realities to prolong this unnatural connection. The day before Parliament met, Rosebery

"called on Mr. Gladstone. He subdued but manly and firm in tone. . . .

"At 11 p.m. the late Cabinet peers met Hartington and Harcourt in Mr. G.'s room. They had been talking over the Queen's Speech with Mr. G. and were in a fine taking as to what Mr. G. would do. It reminded me of the Duke of Grafton's Cabinet talking over the possible intentions of Lord Chatham."

The next morning the late Cabinet met, when, after much fencing over Ireland, it became evident that Hartington had definitely broken away from any policy of Irish self-government, and so from Gladstone's leadership. Rosebery went down to Mentmore, where Sir Henry Ponsonby was one of a small party.

"Sir Henry Ponsonby after dinner said 'I have a message for you from the Queen which I had better give you at once. She thinks you too much under the influence of Herbert Bismarck, who is not of the same ideas as his father. I do not know what she means.' 'Nor do I. Herbert and I hardly correspond about politics, and I write nothing to him which might not be read at Charing Cross. He on his side writes much the same to me.' On reflection I suggested that he must have been making contemptuous remarks about the Battenberg dynasty in Bulgaria and elsewhere, which must have reached H.M.'s ears. . . . The Queen anxious to send for Hartington, on the ground that W. E. G. in his letters on resignation had intimated his intention to retire. I said I thought that it would be a great calamity and blunder, and would defeat H.M.'s object, as I explained. He asked me if

he might tell her so, and I agreed. The Queen very anxious about Granville. I said so was I, but could not remonstrate as I should be countered with the demand—‘Whom would you suggest instead?’ which I could not answer. ‘But the Queen would like Salisbury to be Foreign Minister under Hartington, but failing that has fixed upon you.’ I told H. P. that was impossible. Much talk with him. He acknowledged that *Truth* had wonderful information.”

On January 26th, Rosebery attended the fateful debate when the Government were beaten by 329 to 350 on Jesse Collings’s “Three acres and a cow” amendment. “There was a smart schism on our Bench.” Two days later he went with Lord Spencer

“to see Mr. G. Found him with Wolverton discussing Granville’s return to the F.O. Wolverton gave message from Harcourt to say he would not remain in the House of Commons. ‘But I am determined he shall,’ said Mr. G. Much talk about Lord Granville. I put difficulty of replacing him as he had been Foreign Minister for thirty-three years, more or less, and had absorbed all the experience of the party. Mr. G. said Kimberley would do.”

The next morning he saw Mr. Gladstone for a moment, reading *The Court of Louis XIV*, which he said rested him. He was tired out with writing an answer to the Queen’s possible objections. She had not sent for him, though Salisbury had returned from Osborne three hours before.

After a few quiet days at Mentmore, winding up the shooting season, Rosebery returned to London. He was summoned to Carlton House Terrace by Mr. Gladstone (February 2nd).

“When he came into his little room he at once offered me the Foreign Office. He said he was bound further to state that he saw no alternative for me but the Scottish Office. This he repeated. He further said that the office had the advantage or disadvantage of bringing the holder into the most constant relations with him. I said it was too big a thing for me, that at any rate I must have an hour or two to consider. He admitted that that was fair, but asked me to

be as quick as possible. He promised Granville's hearty co-operation.

"At 3 I sent an acceptance. It is an awful scrape.

"At 11 p.m. I was sent for by the Prince of Wales, who knew of my appointment. At 11.55 to Epsom."

The supersession of Lord Granville was a painful matter for all concerned, not least for Rosebery himself, from his real affection and respect for the late Foreign Secretary. In the practical conduct of public life statesmen have to be treated as being what common opinion judges them to be. By this often unfair test Lord Granville had not of late been a successful Foreign Secretary. If blame had to be apportioned, the Government as a whole, not he as Minister, should have been held responsible for the failures in Egypt, and for difficulties due to the German zest for colonial expansion. But it was felt that in a degree he had lost his grip of critical affairs. Though six years junior to Gladstone, he was in some respects an older man, and he was troubled by frequent attacks of gout. He was besides somewhat harassed in his private affairs, as, in the general depression of business, the great ironworks in Shropshire, which were his family inheritance, had of late suffered severely. Thus not only Queen Victoria, but all his senior colleagues believed that foreign affairs ought to pass into younger and stronger hands. Mr. Gladstone's rule, as we have seen, favoured promotion by seniority; but though circumstances had prevented Rosebery from pausing for the proper interval on each landing of the ministerial staircase, yet a man in his fortieth year, by no means unbroken to official work, could not be regarded as a raw novice. He wrote at once to Lord Granville:

LANSDOWNE HOUSE, February 3rd, 1886.

"MY DEAR LORD GRANVILLE,¹

"I must intrude upon you with one line. You will know otherwise that I have been nominated to the Foreign Office,

¹ Also in *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 483.

but you can only know from myself with what real misgiving and reluctance I go there.

“ No one is so convinced as I am of my unfitness for that post, and no one is better aware that all the knowledge and experience of foreign administration on our side is concentrated in yourself. Your advice and assistance are therefore as indispensable to the Government in foreign affairs as your leadership of the House of Lords is to the smoothing of its path in Parliament. Indeed, had not Mr. Gladstone promised me your generous co-operation, it would have been hardly possible for me even to make the attempt. I hope I am not presumptuous, therefore, in venturing to reckon on your kindness, and your guidance in the overwhelming task which I have undertaken.

“ Believe me,

“ Yours sincerely,

“ R.”

In his conversations in later years Rosebery never would admit that Lord Granville in his prime had been anything but a highly competent Foreign Secretary.

His new post brought Rosebery into more intimate connection with the Court, since, as appears from almost every page of Queen Victoria's correspondence, and from the memoirs of the statesmen who served her, she regarded the Foreign Office, like the War Office, as being the special domain of the Crown. So far back as 1870 Rosebery had been invited to Balmoral, and had there several times dined with the Queen, but he probably was bidden rather as a Scottish magnate, the son of one of her bridesmaids, than as a rising politician. But as the years passed, the shrewd eye of the Sovereign did not fail to watch his progress in public life. And it has been noted¹ that he was asked for his opinion about the Soudan soon after his admission to the Cabinet in 1885, though he had no departmental knowledge of the circumstances. The Queen, as has been seen, now favoured his promotion to the Foreign Office as a

¹ See page 238.

second choice. For some obscure reason, she seems throughout to have entertained a strong official prejudice against Lord Kimberley, than whom there was no more capable administrator and no more loyal and generous-minded man. Sir Henry Ponsonby was instructed to tell Mr. Gladstone that the Queen would never agree to Lord Kimberley's appointment to the Foreign Office. The Prince of Wales had written to the Queen : "If Lord Kimberley is an impossibility, how would Lord Rosebery do ? I cannot help thinking he would be a good appointment." Rosebery, therefore, entered on his new duties with no other disadvantage than the Queen's general disapproval of a Government led by Mr. Gladstone.

Rosebery's audience at the opening Privy Council at Osborne is fully recorded in the Queen's Journal, including his remark that the Foreign Office was "too much."¹ His own brief account runs :

"H.M. very gracious—very anxious about Greece. Radowitz not to be trusted. Herbert Bismarck very hostile to Battenberg of Bulgaria, who is very anti-Russian. General tendency of Europe peaceful, I said, except in the wretched Balkan kingdoms. H.M.'s face fell. I explained I meant Servia and Greece. Ireland quite secondary to foreign politics."

The Queen's face might well fall if she thought that Prince Alexander and his Bulgaria were reckoned among the "wretched kingdoms," and she noted in her Journal that Rosebery "made one very strange and naïve observation, viz. that he hoped Sandro was not Russian ! ! "

Lord Salisbury's report of Rosebery's official visit to him is also given at length in the Queen's Letters.²

"Lord Rosebery," he said, "expressed several times his intention of maintaining the continuity of English politics in foreign affairs."

This was the case, but it is necessary to note the conditions under which the doctrine of "continuity"

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, 3rd Series, vol. i, p. 47. ² *Loc. cit.*, p. 49.

appealed to him. Earlier in the year (January 17th), Count Hatzfeldt had stayed at Mentmore, and had complained that the foreign policy of one British Ministry was overturned by the other. Rosebery replied that this was true, but a successful foreign policy would not be. The condition of continuity was success. Rosebery was able to reassure Lord Salisbury in this instance, because he and Gladstone both felt that their predecessor's policy had been prudent, both in south-east Europe and in Egypt.

Arising out of the position of Bulgaria, squeezed between Russia and Turkey, not a buffer state but a territory which each desired to dominate, Greece had threatened war on Turkey, her secular enemy. This could not be permitted, for none could tell how far such a blaze might spread, and having secured the assent of Prince Bismarck, Lord Salisbury had informed the Greek Government that a naval attack on Turkey was prohibited. This was the sound policy, but Greece could not entirely apprehend the situation. For fifty years some of her Western friends had been asking, in the Byronic vein, where had the Pyrrhic phalanx gone? and now not only was that formation not permitted, but there must be no attempt at another Salamis, and even Navarino seemed to be forgotten. Besides all this, the King of Greece was brother of the beloved Princess of Wales, and this must excite English sympathy, while Rosebery himself had been Chairman of the Greek Committee in London. But it was thought wise in Downing Street to encourage Prince Alexander to come to terms with Turkey, and it must prepossess Turkey in his favour if Greece were restrained by the action of the Powers. So, at Rosebery's first official interview with M. Gennadius¹ (February 8th), he explained that there would be no change in policy or in the instructions to our representatives. He had seen the French Ambassador on the same day, and reported that it struck him, more from manner than anything else, that M.

¹ The Greek Minister.

Waddington was more disposed than before to join the Government in action against Greece. He could not help thinking that the French Government had reckoned completely on a change of attitude towards Greece by Mr. Gladstone's Ministry, and now finding its mistake was anxious not to be left out in the cold.

He was not unduly elated by the pomp of his first reception of the diplomatic body. After sending off the consequent telegrams, he noted "What a fly on a cartwheel."

Greece continued to give anxiety. Rosebery wrote privately to our Ambassador at Berlin :

Private.

.. FOREIGN OFFICE, February 24th, 1886.

" MY DEAR MALET,

" Many thanks for your letters. It almost looks as if Servia and Bulgaria would now make peace in a few days, which I hope will have its effect on Greece.

" It would be an excellent thing if we could get Greece to give way without the portentous machinery of a blockade. But I regard the maintenance of the present fleet and every part of it at Suda Bay as a matter of vital necessity until the question be settled.

" John Hay¹ has replied to our enquiry as to the facility of a blockade by a raw head and bloody bones telegram saying that it would involve the destruction of batteries, the occupation of islands, and the sinking of ships : sketching operations compared to which Navarino would be amicable and Alexandria a flea-bite. None of us who are represented in the allied fleet would contemplate such measures ; and we have now telegraphed out further questions.

" Bismarck must not think me slack in this matter. I have indeed obtained the consent of the Cabinet to the blockade, but I am anxious only to try it as a final resort. And I should like to await the effect of the probable Servo-Bulgarian arrangement, and the conclusion of the Turco-Bulgarian business, before taking this ponderous step, which is always liable to petty and indeed ridiculous obstacles while it will not be particularly popular anywhere. I believe the Greeks are only too anxious for an excuse to give in and that the population is quieting down ; while our demonstration

¹ Admiral Lord John Hay, commanding the Mediterranean Fleet.

might resuscitate the excitement. This is Rumbold's¹ opinion.

"But do not mistake me. I am as determined as ever to proceed with the blockade should the Greeks not give way. Meanwhile, I repeat, it is vital that all the ships should remain where they are, or the Greeks will see disagreement and consequently hope.

"Yours sincerely,
"AR."

Rosebery was at Windsor with the Greek Minister (March 1st) :

"And the Queen said : 'Did you remark when I asked how the King and Queen were, he replied that they were well in health, with great emphasis. I did not know what he might not be going to say, so I thought I had better put an end to the interview.' She was quite right. Gennadius, who was evidently full of speeches, was a little disappointed, but confided to me on the way back that his people were caving in."

The Queen was to open the Indian and Colonial Exhibition, and Rosebery, always impressed by the value of symbols, wrote to Sir Henry Ponsonby :

FOREIGN OFFICE, April 18th, 1886.

"MY DEAR PONSONBY,

"Many thanks for your note, which is, I suppose, conclusive. But it is a thousand pities. The symbol that unites this vast empire is a crown and not a bonnet. These colonists and Hindoos who have come from every part of the world to see their Sovereign open this exhibition regard her as their Sovereign. They will never have another opportunity as long as they live of saying 'We saw our Queen come as Queen and Empress to perform her part as head of this Empire, wearing the Sign which unites us all ; by which she is Queen of New South Wales and the Cape of Good Hope, Queen of Newfoundland, Queen of New Zealand, Empress of India, etc., etc.' To have seen their crowned Queen will impress their imagination ; and they will go to their various homes feeling that they realise the monarchy under which

¹ Sir Horace Rumbold, 8th Baronet, Envoy-Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the King of Greece 1884-8.

they live as an institution and not a person. To see the Queen in morning dress will gratify their personal loyalty, and interest them profoundly, but it will not impress them with the fact that they have seen the ancient and permanent symbol as distinguished from the personality of the monarch.

“ You must remember that to nine-tenths of these colonists a Queen without a crown is hardly a Queen at all, and that, if the Queen on this historical occasion appears before them as the lady president of a republic might, you lose the opportunity of a political inspiration and a cohesive memory. Alas—however—we cannot struggle with the inevitable.

“ Yours,
“ AR.”

It was not until late in April that France joined the other Powers in presenting an ultimatum to Greece, and in May a notice of blockade by the combined squadrons was presented, it being necessary to restrain the Greek fleet from any adventure against Turkey. In the House of Lords Rosebery laid papers covering the action of the Government since it took office, with copies of the collective notes addressed to Greece and the replies made to these and to the notice of blockade. Greece, he stated, had not placed its army on a peace footing, and refused to disarm. The result was that the land forces of the two countries remained drawn up face to face. Turkey had ceded Thessaly to Greece five years before, and was not now prepared for another cession. The Turks had to keep an army of 300,000 men in Europe, which meant employment of the Reserve, with such loss of agricultural labour as to cause famine in some districts. It was important to uphold the European Concert, and this had been achieved, even though France had taken some separate action. Lord Salisbury, while reserving a final judgment, said that the policy which the country was pursuing was that of all parties in the State.

It was not only the French who had anticipated that the new Government in Downing Street would initiate a new policy in south-eastern Europe, and the supposition added not a little to Rosebery’s

difficulties. The German Ambassador believed that both Greeks and Servians were counting on such a change, in spite of Gladstone's and Rosebery's public declarations. The Queen's special interest in Prince Alexander made her the central figure in this particular tableau. The Prince was brother of Prince Louis, who had started the career of brilliant service in the British Navy which he concluded as an admirably efficient First Sea Lord. He was brother, too, of Prince Henry, who filled with tact and discretion the difficult position of being resident at Windsor as the Queen's son-in-law. The Sovereign was thus in specially frequent communication with the Foreign Office at this moment of many complications between Turkey and Greece, Russia and Bulgaria, Austria and Servia. Rosebery wrote gratefully :

February 14th.—“Your Majesty's great experience and Lord Rosebery's absolute inexperience in foreign affairs do indeed represent the opposite extremes, and he can only congratulate himself and the country that the one is used to correct the other. With such guidance and the absolute devotion to the service of Your Majesty and the country which is the only quality he claims, he hopes that these difficult and complicated negotiations may be brought to a successful issue.”

This was a charming valentine for Her Majesty, and it was indeed a complicated situation. Servia would not demobilize, waiting on Greece. Rosebery's only hope at the moment was that the three empires might arrive at a united opinion on the agreement which Prince Alexander had made with Turkey.

The Queen may have conceived that his alleged inexperience might extend to carelessness about her private communications ; for he had to tell Sir Henry Ponsonby :

“Please assure Her Majesty that no one opens any boxes she is pleased to address to me except myself. Indeed, I open all my boxes, except some purely departmental ones.”

The Queen's opinion of Rosebery as "the only really good appointment" in the entire Government was frankly stated to the Prince of Wales.¹

Rosebery had written to the Queen about the belated adhesion of France to the European Concert :

April 28th.—“The French diplomatic triumph does not amount to much. The French, while negotiating with us as to joining the Concert of the Powers, and quibbling over a word to cause delay, telegraphed to the Greeks that they had better give way, for the Powers were really going to act. It is a proceeding of a little boy who runs to tell a pilfering comrade that the policeman is round the corner. Lord Rosebery, however, is sure that Your Majesty does not care who takes the credit so long as the object is attained.”

France was not in the good books of the Foreign Office. A little later, news came from Paris that a reception held by the Comte de Paris had caused very strong feeling against the Royal Family, and that M. de Freycinet would probably not be able to resist the demand for their expulsion from France. Rosebery wrote to the Queen in reply to a question from her that a representation by her Government would do more harm than good :

“To expel the Orleans princes, and to disoblige the English, would, in the eyes of many Frenchmen, be killing two tempting birds with one stone.”

Later there was trouble with France in the New Hebrides. Some French traders had been murdered, a French ship was sent with troops, and it was asserted that the French flag had been hoisted. Opinion in Australia became excited, and Rosebery, after interviews with the French Ambassador, drafted a strongly worded dispatch to Lord Lyons. On this Mr. Gladstone wrote :

“Though the case for the New Hebrides is unsatisfactory and warrants suspicion, I would suggest for your consideration

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria, 3rd Series, vol. i, p. 58.*

whether it is not rather more acid in expression than the present stage requires. What appears to me is that Freycinet's declarations (I have no very good opinion of him) in themselves are not unreasonable."

He went on to ask whether in a similar case we should not have taken much the same action. Rosebery replied that he had struck out one paragraph suggesting that the French attached insufficient importance to their obligations. He added :

" The despatch is not to be read to M. de Freycinet. It is for Lord Lyons' guidance who is always suave and cautious. But in the present state of colonial feeling, and in view of the suspicious action of the French, it is necessary for us to leave on record a despatch of considerable firmness. The French sent this expedition without telling us a word, to avenge murders of which they knew nothing, and as to which even now they give shuffling answers. Their soldiers are building wooden barracks. They have notified the missionaries that they are establishing military posts, and they are sending 360 *récidivistes* to New Caledonia. The latter circumstance will set Australia in a blaze which the other proceedings are not calculated to assuage. If our despatch is not recorded in a serious form we alienate the Colonies (whose views as to language are primitive and spicy) while we neither strengthen our position with the French nor express the full force of an overwhelming case."

In very early days at the Foreign Office Rosebery was challenged to show whether he could do more than drive his team with a light hand and whether he could use the whip on occasion. Sir Robert Morier, our Ambassador at St. Petersburg, was one of the ablest figures in the Diplomatic Service, but a man very conscious of his own powers, and impatient of official control. The Foreign Office regarded him much as the Cabinet regarded Sir William Harcourt. He had received direct instructions (February 16th) to inform the Russian Government that Germany had been invited to join in representing to the Sultan that he would do well to sacrifice one of his conditions in his

arrangement with Prince Alexander. This, it was thought, should remove the objections felt at St. Petersburg. The Porte agreed to give up this stipulation, which was for mutual military assistance, and Morier was told (February 19th) to urge the Russian Government to drop their other objections to the agreement. Instead of doing this, he wrote a dispatch of some length, giving his reasons, good or bad, for not following the instructions, the main reason being the impermeable attitude of his German colleague. This was a little too much, for it meant that Sir Robert, from his local knowledge, was better able to conduct these European negotiations than the Foreign Office, with its command of information from every point of the compass. He was coldly informed :

“ I must request, if on a future occasion Your Excellency should see serious objections to the execution of such instructions as you may receive, that you will communicate such objections to me by telegram, and will report the course which you are taking or which you desire to take.”

The whole story is told in the *Letters of Queen Victoria*,¹ as she evidently took keen interest in this first court martial held by her new Foreign Secretary. She must have been amused by Rosebery’s comment :

“ It is no consolation to Lord Rosebery to read in *The Times* this morning that Sir R. Morier has given one of the most successful balls of the season : or to hear from Sir R. Morier that the Tsar is greatly pleased with Lord Rosebery’s method of conducting business, of which indeed, owing to Sir R. Morier’s proceedings, the Tsar can know nothing.”

But no rancour persisted, and a letter from the Private Secretary (March 17th) assured the erring Ambassador that the matter would drop, so far as Rosebery was concerned, with a good-natured message from him advising Morier to be careful not to say anything at St. Petersburg which might do prejudice

¹ Third Series, vol. i, pp. 67-72.

to him in high quarters in England and Germany if it came round "as everything does." Morier was intimate with the Royal Family at Berlin, which made the warning necessary.

Sir E. Thornton at Constantinople, Sir F. Lascelles at Sofia, and Sir William White at Bucarest were all in perpetual communication with the Foreign Secretary, officially and privately. Prince Alexander, overborne by Russia, misused by Servia, and the subject of endless Turkish intrigue, was not always amenable to advice from Downing Street, or even from Windsor. Instead of ruling over a united Bulgaria, as was his right, he was to be merely Governor-General of Eastern Roumelia under the suzerainty of Turkey, and there was much discussion of the term for which he should be nominated. Rosebery explained to Sir E. Thornton (March 24th) that our position was simple, that we had fought as long as we could for an appointment for no fixed term (to which Russia had strongly objected), and only joined in signing for a term of five years because all the other Powers did the same. Prince Alexander had not complained or protested during all the time, but lodged a protest at the end, so they had to agree to sign without him, and Rosebery told Sir F. Lascelles that this might not be a bad thing, because if the settlement were unpopular in the Principality he would be divested of responsibility. The Prince was taking a dangerous attitude to which he could give no support (March 28th).

"If the Prince can keep on the throne five years he will be safe for an unlimited period. If he cannot, what is the use of a longer term?"

The fatal answer to this query was not given while Rosebery was Foreign Secretary. The kidnapping of Prince Alexander and his deportation to Russia (August 22nd), his return to Sofia amid the apparent applause of the population, and his final abdication (September 6th) after finding disaffection general and

the support of Europe lacking—these occurred after the fall of the Government.

But on the eve of its defeat Rosebery had to encounter another Russian manœuvre, and to encounter it alone. By Article LIX of the Treaty of Berlin Batoum was declared to be a free port. The Emperor of Russia had decided to put an end to this régime, on the ground that the Treaty only registered a spontaneous declaration, not a stipulation. All the Continental signatory Powers discussed the matter, and agreed that it was not of much practical importance. Neither Prince Bismarck nor the Austrian Chancellor, Count Kalnoky, took it very seriously, the former believing it to be a step towards conciliating national opinion brooding over recent disappointments, and the latter simply saying that he did not admire the mode of proceeding, but that there was nothing to be done. Rosebery told one Foreign Ambassador that in his opinion we ought to decline to recognise the Russian declaration, and to leave Russia, as it were, in a state of illegality and outlawry against the public law of Europe. He accordingly addressed a dispatch to St. Petersburg (July 13th), in which, after closely arguing the case from the Treaty of Berlin protocols, he said :

“ One direct, supreme, and perpetual interest is no doubt at stake in this transaction—that of the binding force and sanctity of international engagements. Great Britain is ready at all times and in all seasons to uphold that principle, and she cannot palter with it in the present instance. . . . Her Majesty’s Government are compelled to place on record their view that this proceeding of the Russian Government constitutes a violation of the Treaty of Berlin, unsanctioned by the signatory Powers, that it tends to make future Conventions of the kind difficult, if not impossible ; and to cast doubt at least on those already concluded.

“ It must be for the other Powers to judge how far they can acquiesce in this breach of an international engagement.

“ But in no case can Her Majesty’s Government have any share in it. It must rest on the responsibility of its authors.”

This was pretty sharp wording, and the Russian Chancellor, M. de Giers, who, according to Morier's information, had strongly opposed this action unless it were taken by previous agreement, took the reproof hardly, and as Sir Robert Morier reported :

"Losing his self-control he exclaimed, trembling as he spoke, 'This is the most wounding communication that has ever been addressed to one Power by another. It has gone straight to my heart, and will remain there till I die ; and when it is published in the blue book, it will go straight to the heart of every Russian and will rankle there.'"

When the Emperor was informed, "he was painfully affected by the accusation of having violated the Treaty of Berlin . . . but he sincerely desired the maintenance of the good relations at present subsisting"; and Rosebery could not resist writing privately to Morier that M. de Giers' appearance of having received a slap on the face and his intention of carrying the dispatch in his heart till he dies seemed rather theatrical, as Morier had made it clear in his dispatch that he had been using the same arguments, couched in language quite as forcible.

Egypt was technically at peace, but her frontier was insecure, her finances were embarrassed, and there was "the hindrance which is offered to all effective administration by the peculiar international obligations which Egypt has incurred." Chief among these were the Capitulations, on a system said to date back seven hundred years to privileges granted by Saladin to one of the small Italian republics, and a cause of general inconvenience down to our own day. There were also the mixed tribunals—a regular source of international friction. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, one of the lights of the Fourth Party, quick and amusing, playing to a Conservative Government the part which Labouchere took when the Liberals were in power, had been sent on a Special Mission to Cairo by Lord Salisbury. Rosebery desired its continuance, but wrote :

"As I am the least of the apostles, and some nine or ten years younger than the youngest member of the Cabinet, I may not carry so much weight as I could wish."

He asked Sir Henry (February 19th) to continue writing dispatches as interesting and valuable as those addressed to his predecessor :

"But your stumbling-block will be expense. Remember what a fierce and drastic economist is our present Dictator. And that if you were to make Egypt happy, contented and prosperous next week, your present expenditure would cause him a pang and make him desire your instant removal. . . . I daresay you will think me very Scotch in emphasising expense, but it is only from the friendly wish to remove one of the greatest obstacles in the reception of your mission in Parliament and at home generally."

The presence of Moukhtar Pasha, the Sultan's envoy, did not make the Egyptian situation less complex. He had taken too much on himself, and Rosebery wrote to Sir Henry :

March 19th.—"While I am anxious that you should keep up your friendly relations with Moukhtar, I hope you will equally display great firmness if necessary, and if for instance he should attempt to interfere with the moving of British troops to Assouan, you will give him blandly to understand that his own business should keep him fully occupied without making it necessary for him to interfere with other people's.

"We are quite willing and anxious to work with him if possible, but he must not become a mere perpetual purposeless obstacle. Are these diplomatic oilwells that Nubar has gone to visit ? Or is it a genuine desire to sniff petroleum ? "

Nubar Pasha, the famous Armenian Minister of the Khedive, was sanguine about a great oil development in Egypt ; but as Rosebery wrote later :

"It will take a good deal of petroleum to pay off the debt of Egypt in twenty years."

Before the Government fell there was much discussion about the blockade of the Soudan, which

from time to time was exercised to prevent the passage of arms to the Khalifa. Drummond Wolff took the side of the Cairo merchants, who professed to be ruined by the prohibition of harmless exports. Rosebery objected, "What we have too often displayed in Egypt, a shifting policy without aim or principle," and he asked :

June 25th.—"Are we to be the only sufferers in Egypt? Is the shoe not to pinch the Egyptians at all? Is she not to have a share in the disadvantages of defending the country? We are to find trade for the Cairo merchants, at the expense of our own troops and our own tax payers, who will be called on to defend the frontier against the troops that this trade is to furnish forth for attack."

A week later he wrote :

"I shall not enter now into questions of *haut politique*, for I am in an interesting condition, electorally speaking, and shall not know for a few days whether I am a man or a mouse."

It turned up mouse, and in his final letter of good-bye he wrote :

July 30th.—"My idea has been to give Egypt some little opportunity of working out her own salvation without constant interference from without. Circumstances have favoured that policy, not the least of which have been your industry and spirit of conciliation. It will always be a pleasant recollection to have worked with you."

Almost every letter contained references to Randolph Churchill, the close friend of both, and the author of Rosebery's friendship with Drummond Wolff. Rosebery was also in frequent communication with Sir Evelyn Baring, quietly carrying on, amid innumerable difficulties, the work which was to prove so fruitful and to make him so famous.

The only speech of any length that Rosebery had to make in the House of Lords as Foreign Secretary was on an Egyptian subject. Lord Salisbury was a

merciful master of legions when foreign matters were at issue, and was content with the attitude taken by his successor in the Balkan complications. But some independent Peers asked why Zobeir Pasha could not be released from detention at Gibraltar and permitted to go up the Nile. For upwards of a year that remarkable personage had been interned at the request of the military authorities in Egypt, it having been found that he was in communication with the Soudan tribes. Rosebery had no difficulty in showing that after the refusal, by the country rather than by the government of the day, of Gordon's request for Zobeir, it would be impossible, now that the Soudan was by general agreement being abandoned for the time, to send him back there as a sort of British agent. The motion was therefore negatived without a division. Rosebery's only other interventions in the House were brief replies to ordinary questions.

During Rosebery's tenure of office there were no troublesome questions with America ; and though there was frequent correspondence about the Russo-Afghan frontier, its details were more directly the concern of the India Office. During his brief term in Downing Street he had not only confirmed the opinion that he was a man of outstanding ability, but he had gained a reputation for moderation and reason. He had seen the advantage in the conduct of foreign affairs of gaining the confidence of Queen Victoria ; for her unrivalled experience, and her prestige throughout the continent of Europe, formed a backing which no Foreign Secretary could afford to neglect. Where her family affections were involved, as with the fate of Prince Alexander of Battenberg, her opinion might be strongly biased, but as a rule, in external affairs, she was singularly free from deep-seated prejudice of the sort which precluded her from contemplating a scheme of self-government for Ireland in any shape whatever. She not only thought Rosebery "a very clever pleasant man, and very kind," but she opened out to him her confidential

opinion of the Prime Minister and his intentions in a letter printed in the collection of her correspondence,¹ to which Rosebery replied as follows :

FOREIGN OFFICE, *July 12th, 1886.*

“ Lord Rosebery with his humble duty respectfully submits his thanks to Your Majesty for Your Majesty’s gracious letter ; which he cannot but consider as a mark of confidence most gratifying to him.

“ He need hardly repeat his strong opinion in favour of resignation. Ever since April he has been of opinion that if the Government were beaten on the second reading of the Irish Bill they should resign. Some of his colleagues at first appeared to agree with him ; but before the division took place they had changed their minds. He therefore did not urge the question in the Cabinet. But on this occasion he feels sure of a much larger support, if not of that of Mr. Gladstone himself.

“ Mr. Gladstone has, however, written him a letter which he thinks shows that the Prime Minister leans at present to immediate resignation.

“ The only alternatives would appear to be to resign at once or receive the *coup de grâce* at the meeting of Parliament in the beginning of August.

“ Lord Rosebery cannot conceive it possible that any of the present administration should seek the support of the dissident Liberals ; or seeking it, obtain it.

“ Lord Rosebery ventures to think that Mr. Gladstone’s is not a nature which could endure power on sufferance. Considering that there will be four distinct parties in the new House of Commons, none of which will work together for all purposes and all occasions, it will be difficult enough to form a sufficiently strong administration to carry on the affairs of this country at home and abroad with due efficiency. No one, he thinks, is likely to see this more clearly than Mr. Gladstone, or to perceive that his own party has by no means the best chance, or perhaps even the second best chance, of securing this desirable result.

“ Lord Rosebery is not sure if he has answered fully and satisfactorily the points raised in Your Majesty’s letter, but he need not say that he will be only too glad to supplement this letter in any way or on any questions that may be desirable.

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, 3rd Series, vol. i, p. 159.

“ He humbly thanks Your Majesty for Your Majesty’s gracious reference to himself.”

According to plan and to precedent, Rosebery, throughout his term at the Foreign Office, was in almost daily communication with the Prime Minister, often by brief notes, oftener still by stepping across Downing Street to secure five minutes of advice. Mr. Gladstone was ailing in the winter, and Rosebery’s first note from the Foreign Office ran :

“ I am very sorry to hear of the rheumatism which, according to song, lives in damp attics, which is an abiding reproach to Mentmore.”

Even through his Irish pre-occupations the leader kept in close touch with the tangle of south-east Europe, and with Greece in particular. He was for determined use of the fleet as the surest method of keeping the peace. Rosebery was able to write on April 17th that Greece had yielded, though ungraciously. In the same letter he touched on our relations with Germany in East Africa, which were not finally adjusted until fourteen years later.

“ Bismarck is rather difficult to deal with. Things are not going as he wishes at Zanzibar, and he is very much put out, accusing all our agents of hostility. I am inclined to think that the best solution of the question would be that the Sultan should cede part of his territory to Germany in exchange for a guarantee of the rest from France, Germany and ourselves. However, I cannot propose this. . . . I had to give Hatzfeldt a strong hint that they must take care at Berlin of the style of their communications, which is apt to savour distantly of menace.

“ There is nothing to take hold of, but the tone is not altogether what it should be.”

No admiration for Prince Bismarck could make the Foreign Secretary submissive to the faintest rattle of the sabre.

Every man on leaving a public office feels emotion at his farewell to his loyal companions of the Civil

Service with whom he has worked. He is fortunate if he can write as Rosebery did (July 29th) : “ Engaged in distributing Honours and making people happy. The greatest joy in the world.”

In the course of Mr. Gladstone’s amazing campaign he spoke at Manchester (June 25th), and, after running through the names of the colleagues who had stood by him, he came to “ the youngest member of the Cabinet, of whom I will say to the Liberal party of this country, and I say it not without reflection, for if I said it lightly I should be doing injustice no less to him than to them—in whom I say to the Liberal party that they see the man of the future.”

Rosebery wrote :

June 29th, 1886.—“ . . . Since the Ambassadors have left me more alone I have begun to read a few speeches. I did not quite like your first, but that was only the lowest step of the ladder which you have been mounting ever since. Now, however, the eminence is gained, and in my humble judgment in all the history of your marvellous efforts you have never made a campaign so splendid as this last. I put age aside as a preposterous and bewildering consideration. I regard you as having surpassed yourself in a way I should have deemed impossible. If you win this election, it will be your victory alone, no army, not even an imperial guard, hardly a staff, with perhaps Morley as an esquire or aide de camp. It will be a rare and incredible achievement, and I shall only regret having not heard one single syllable, or witnessed one single reception.

“ I was arrested in your speech at Manchester by your unexpected outbursts about myself. It is a delicate subject to speak about, but I wish you to understand that I feel from my heart you are mistaken, through partiality and kindness. I have attained much more than the highest summit of my ambition, and the furthest reach of my capacity. I can hardly hope to keep my place. Napoleon said of his marshals that he knew the *tirant d'eau* of each of them. Look over your marshals again and you will know that I am right. My draught of water is that of a punt, and I remain gladly in the shallows.

“ I doubt if a peer can ever lead the Liberal party again : he has the gain of comparative ease, against which he must

set the disadvantage that he must not wrestle for the prize. I indeed count that no disadvantage, for I am more than satisfied and have won a greater prize than I could ever have dreamed of. I shall gladly serve as long as I remain in public life.

“ This is a strange letter, for I do not often venture to offer you praise or considerations about myself. But I am stimulated to write thus, without intending it when I began, by your achievements and your praise. Though the latter is wholly unmerited and must in my opinion be flagrantly falsified, it will remain a heritage for me and an heirloom for my children.

“ Yrs. affly.,
“ A. R.”

Nothing that might have shaken Rosebery's judgment during the progress of the swaying battle on Home Rule had so far affected him. Chamberlain and Trevelyan went, but there was nothing to make him abandon hope. At Christmas of the previous year he had written to Reginald Brett :

December 23rd, 1885.—“ I cannot understand people preferring separation to Home Rule. I detest separation, and feel that nothing could make me agree to it. Home Rule, however, is a necessity both for us and for the Irish. They will have it within two years at the latest, Scotland will follow, and then England. When that is accomplished Imperial Federation will cease to be a dream. To many of us it is not a dream now, but to no one will it be a dream then.”

Holding this faith, and up to the neck in the European whirlpool, he did not attempt to follow the details of the Irish measure, crucial though they proved to be.

February 24th.—“ Gladstone beginning to expound his Irish plan, with which he said he did not trouble me as he knew how busy I was, and then he was acting within the scope of what he knew to be my ideas. I implored him to spare me. But when he sketched a vast skeleton, I could

not resist saying slyly, 'Is it six or seven years since you told me you had lost all power of constructive legislation?' Mr. G. could not help chuckling."

In June (17th) Rosebery devoted the whole of a long speech at Glasgow to the Irish question. The man who would deny that the Irish were in favour of local government would deny anything. The Conservatives had put an end to exceptional legislation in Ireland, and after the election the Liberal Government tried conciliation of parties to the utmost, and asked for a vote on the simple proposition of a legislative body for Ireland. The supremacy of the Imperial Parliament was to be maintained. The Conservative policy was simply twenty years of coercion. As to Ulster, speaking as a Scotsman, he could not understand why 1,200,000 Protestants should fear to throw in their lot with Ireland. He did not believe in the bloodthirsty theologians who came forward with the Shorter Catechism in one hand and the revolver in the other. He believed that in a few years the complaint would be that Ulster, with its Scottish ancestry, would have more than its fair share of predominance. He concluded: "Are you as weary as we are of that fatal and dreary policy of giving Ireland everything except that which she wants, and that which, according to every principle of Liberalism, we have ever held she has a right to obtain?"

His own comment on the speech was: "Spoke for 1 hour 20 m. Eheu. Enthusiasm enormous, not for me but the thing."

After the Conservative victory at the election (October 19th) he spoke once more on Ireland at the meeting of the Newcastle Liberal Club. On the text of the unity of the party he examined the remarkable figures of the late election, drawing from the extraordinary number of abstentions the conclusion that the country was asking for time to make up its mind, but had not rejected the policy. Now that they were

in opposition, their function was to watch and to criticise. Between Liberals and Liberal Unionists there was a difference of degree, not of principle, because most of the latter held that the Irish ought to manage their own internal affairs in their own way. Some give and take ought to bring about an arrangement with them.

Such were the hopes that, at the beginning of the following year, brought Liberals and Liberal Unionists to a brief and fruitless colloquy at Harcourt and Chamberlain's Round Table.

A flying visit to Hawarden followed.

“ Mr. G. said he had heard Chamberlain was exasperated at the allusion to me as man of the future. He had not meant it offensively to J. C., who was in the House of Commons, while I was in the House of Lords, and therefore did not compete with him. In speaking of me he had thought of age and the proved capacity for development. He said he agreed with me in going for conciliation, but what middle course was there? I said, ‘ Suppose the Irish M.P.s were to be constituted a local government for Ireland?’ He said he had thought much of that, but the Irish Peers were the difficulty. I said, ‘ Let them alone, or let them elect representatives as at present.’ He mused, ‘ That would be a Conservative element, but there would be no harm in that.’ He seemed rather taken with the idea. Full of gloom about Churchill and Chamberlain in the future, and of wrath over England's treatment of Ireland. Gave me a little book with a Latin inscription and blessed me tenderly on going.”

CHAPTER IX

VISIT TO INDIA, 1886-7: EGYPT: THE IRISH QUESTION: THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE: IMPERIAL FEDERATION

ON October 28th the Roseberys started for India. Their companion was Ronald Munro Ferguson of Novar and Raith, who had been a private secretary at the Foreign Office and, as Rosebery told his mother, "insisted on continuing so." Raith is just across the Firth of Forth from Dalmeny, and there was a family association of long standing ; but this was the real beginning of a close intimacy, personal as well as political, marked by genuine affection and respect on both sides, and by unstinted loyalty on that of the younger man. Sir Arthur Hardinge,¹ just appointed Governor of Gibraltar, was going to be landed at the Rock, and as far as Egypt they had the congenial society of Henry Calcraft. Short of Gibraltar there was the excitement of collision with a large sailing ship, only not sunk because they were going at half speed—"What was strange was that within five minutes of the catastrophe the saloon sounded as if dinner were going on—full of chattering females. I remained lazily in bed." But when they reached Gibraltar, having their victim in tow, it was found that necessary repairs to their own bows, where some plates were sprung, meant a short delay in their journey. Asked by the Governor to find their way to the official house, the Convent, they walked up there, and to their horror found themselves in the midst of a levee held by the outgoing and incoming Governors.

"There was a pause, the Governors looked at us, Henry Calcraft groaned 'Go on.' I saw what was expected, and

¹ General Sir Arthur Hardinge, K.C.B., second son of 1st Viscount Hardinge. Governor of Gibraltar 1886-90.



LADY ROSEBERY, BY G. F. WATTS, R.A.

with the sensation of taking a header walked forward in a grey tweed suit, a pot hat in my hand, a large white cotton umbrella under my arm, my race glasses slung round me—in a word the British Tourist in his most excruciating form. Shook hands with the Governors, bowed deeply and passed to the left followed by the somewhat less seedy Calcraft and Ferguson. Afterwards all Gibraltar, the Chief Justice in his wig, the Vicar Apostolic in purple, the military in their uniforms did similar homage. It was a very funny scene so far as we were concerned."

They saw the sights of the Rock, though not the monkeys, and were even able to pay a flying visit to San Roque across the Spanish frontier. They sailed on the evening of November 3rd.

"I watched for some time the splendid trophy. From the Mediterranean side the rock seems to face Africa with the head of an elephant, and Europe with the head of a lion. We have held it for two centuries, and the power of man has vainly tried to wrench it from us. It should be the symbol of England. Till I saw Gibraltar I never fully realised why we are so hated in Europe."

At the short pause at Malta Rosebery was fascinated by the "Barocco, or cloistered walk where the monk-knights used to walk, chafing in their limits and eyeing the sea as comported the frontier sentries of the Christian world." The armoury appeared to him the most interesting he had seen, because it gave the impression of being the most genuine. He had been entrusted with some parcels for Prince George of Wales, then serving on board the *Dreadnought*, a name then without the formidable significance that it held twenty years later. "He had grown a beard, and seems to have shot up," was Rosebery's description of his future Sovereign.

Malta, take it for all in all, did not strike him as so imperial a monument as Gibraltar, but much more likely to be coveted and much more difficult to defend. There was a Radical party, he was told, favouring annexation to Italy, while many of the peasantry

believed the island still to be governed by the Knights.

There was no special incident at Port Said, whence they had the company of intimate friends in the Duke and Duchess of Manchester and Lord Fife; or at Aden, except that at the latter Rosebery had a long walk with a leading official who had been there for sixteen years, and explained that it was because he had not been allowed to accept promotion elsewhere:

“The last time he had been so prevented was by me. He had been offered an appointment in the Bombay Presidency¹ which he had been debarred by me from accepting. I exclaimed indignantly, ‘It must have been under my successor!’ ‘No,’ he replied firmly in a voice which vibrated with sorrow and essential veracity, ‘I well know it was your lordship.’ What remained for me but to point out that there were persons in the world who could not be replaced: this was the penalty they had to pay for extraordinary merit: and that in the critical state of the Somali question it would have been madness to separate oneself from him. It was not a very promising commencement for our interview, but he is an excellent fellow, and we were soon wallowing in the alluvial mud of Zeyla, Berber, Harrar and the Somali. I was delighted to hear that my anxiety about Socotra was well founded. Two or three days after I had got the treaty concluded and the flag delivered, a German ship of war appeared and asked to whom Socotra belonged. On the Union Jack being hoisted she at once disappeared.”

There was fair time for reading throughout the voyage. Rosebery began with Eliot Norton’s two new volumes of Carlyle’s letters, in which he found little or nothing, and “finished, too, the much more interesting biography of that wild poetic antediluvian parson, Hawker of Morwenstow.” He read a great deal of Balzac, Burton’s *Mecca*, and the volume of Lord Aberdeen’s private letters.

Bombay was almost a welcome home (November 22nd), for Lord and Lady Reay were at Malabar Point. There was frequent entertaining there, and everything

¹ Aden was under the Bombay Presidency.

that Bombay had to show, including a rather ghastly visit to the Towers of Silence, at which some other Englishmen of the party displayed a ghoulish interest in the obsequies. Rosebery's leading impression was of pity for the distinguished Parsi gentleman who was their guide. "Fancy if, whenever an eminent person came to London, I had to take him to Kensal Green and there listen with him to a lecture on decomposition and the funeral service." But all experiences were not so grim. He visited the temples and the markets, had pleasant meals at the club, long walks and talks with Reay and his officials, and made an expedition in a launch to the caves of Elephanta.

On December 2nd they set out for Ahmedabad and the relics of its vanished glories of mosque and tank, this last—

"an exquisite lake constructed in 1451 and restored by Mr. Borrodaile, a public-spirited Collector, with all the private funds he could extract and all the public he could economise ; for which last proceedings he was incredibly snubbed and wiggled. Honour to him for ever, say I. A road connects the mainland with an island of trees and flowers, on which we stood and mused watching the gay groups of holiday makers reflected brilliantly in the smooth waters as they wended their way home, and the rich deep afterglow of the sunset. I have enjoyed nothing in India so much."

Jaipur was the next stage (December 5th) :

"Just before we arrived I tossed Ronald his Panama hat, which however skimmed gracefully through the window into the jungle. If events are to rank according to their real importance, this deserves the first place."

The travellers missed the unrivalled glories of Udaipur, for the Resident was absent, but found plenty to occupy them at Jaipur in the lovely gardens, in the animal fights where no animal or bird was injured, though "the rams rushed at each other and banged their foreheads till they recoiled and our heads ached to see it ; and the pigs of pigsticking, sulky,

truculent, and extremely like the British householder of the middle class"; and most of all in the climb to the deserted city of Amber, with its great empty palace-halls and noble views through the range of hills.

On to Agra to the hospitable house of Colonel Euan Smith¹ (December 8th). From all the scenes that nature or art have made famous, fewer travellers, perhaps, have returned disappointed from Agra than from any other. Assuredly Rosebery did not.

“THE TAJ

“ What a day in one’s life. We spent three hours beside the marble lily, virgin in silent and exquisite triumph over her eternal chastity. I was so moved that I broke into what I am pleased to call verse, so will desist from prose. We climbed minarets, we walked round it, we sat in contemplation before it, we were intoxicated with it.”

Rosebery jotted down some isolated lines, such as “ A gate of heaven, could we find the key,” and “ A flash of moonshine petrified; the door of gracious dreams.”

But his final sonnet took the form :

“THE TAJ

“ Image of Heaven ! unto him that sees
 Thy portal, earth and death and time are past :
 He moves in spirit o’er the pathless seas,
 To that dread Vision which shall be the last.
 His gaze discerns the palaces that crown
 Thy mount, O Sion ! Immortality
 Breathes o’er the ‘ peerless Tomb.’ Hence grief hath flown,
 Death has no sting, and grave no victory.
 ‘ My father’s house hath many mansions’ : fair
 Fell here their shadow in some straying beam :
 And we who watch can see the glory there,
 The nightless day and the eternal dream.
 So let us gaze a moment free from care.
 The Christian prays, the Moslem built a prayer.”

There is a note of Keats and a note of Wordsworth in these verses. Nothing of the still surviving Tenny-

¹ (1842-1910.) Cons. Gen. Zanzibar 1887-91; Min. Res. Tangier 1891-98. K.C.B., etc.

son or Matthew Arnold. His farewell to the dream-temple four days later may be noted here :

“ In the afternoon at sunset we paid our last visit to the Taj. It was bathed in the lemon light of the sunset, a Moslem was shouting his appeal to Allah, not unmusically, the divine building seemed more serene and matchless than ever. I left it with emotion : shall I ever see it again ? It is not likely, but it is hard to part for ever with so beloved a dream. It is not too much to say that I am in love with it. I cannot tear myself from it, or keep my eyes off it. It is a sublime madness of which I am not ashamed.”

But there was also the noble tomb of Akhbar at Sikandra, with a marble pillar at its foot in which once stood the Koh-i-noor.

“ Honest times. Lord Northbrook when Viceroy gave a covering worth £500 to the tomb of Akhbar which was at once stolen. But then Christianity and superior civilisation had intervened.”

And there was the abandoned city of Fatehpur Sikri, with its gorgeous red sandstone mosque, and the intricate palace of the great Emperor :

“ But Akhbar neither *lassatus* nor *satiatus* left this splendid creation and built Agra ! What lives those men had,—and yet no longer than ours.”

There was the jail, where prisoners make carpets, “ cheap, durable, and extremely lovely,” and last the fort, “ a splendid assemblage of stern and exquisite beauties.”

After he had “ imitated my lineal but remote ancestor (as the Prince of Wales said of King Alfred), Moses Primrose, and bought green spectacles,” the party passed on to Delhi, where the architecture of mosque and fort seemed to Rosebery less impressive than at Agra, but where he “ visited bareheaded ” the place where Nicholson fell and others consecrated in the siege.

Lahore came next. It was beginning to be cold—

bracing and delicious—but the temperature of 46 degrees in the Lieutenant-Governor's sleeping tents made an abrupt change from Bombay. Here Rosebery met a long list of the officials active in the north-west, where the heart of India beats strong, and he was introduced to the savage squalor of the Afghan horse market. They started by train for Peshawar, fascinated by the novelty of the landscape, and by the Indus “flowing composed and conscious in a strong deep stream between two rocky banks, the most striking piece of scenery I have seen in India.” The bazaar at Peshawar was a novelty, being Asiatic, not Indian, and another novelty was the escort of two mounted sowars in front and two behind when he and Ferguson walked in the bazaar.

“While in front again and around were policemen on foot attacking everything living with their truncheons, hustling the people from their doors as they sat, and sending them flying like bundles of old clothes going to the wash. It was an amazing spectacle, but one must not judge the East at first sight, it is clear. No one seemed to mind the least. In the afternoon I had a conversation with Abdul Kader Khan, the prime minister of Shere Ali, the very man who proclaimed the *jehad* against us ; very interesting it was.”

An expedition to the Khyber was signalled by the unforeseen meeting of one of their party, a young Afridi chief, with his half-brother, who appeared with some forty or fifty armed followers. There was a deadly blood feud between the two, and anything might happen :

“I saw our chief dismount and hurriedly shake hands with his brother, and remount with a sensible look of relief. I afterwards found out that he had said to the native officer, ‘Subadhar, if I shake hands with my brother, will you promise to come and stand close beside me ?’ And it was on the promise of the Subadhar faithfully performed that he saluted his excellent relative. He had indeed good reason for uneasiness. Had we not been there he would have been killed like a dog as a matter of course.”

Rosebery and Ferguson made another expedition to Kohat, the genuine frontier post, with its Sikh garrison, where they were interested in observing the methods whereby young Indian "politics" learn their job. A tonga drive of thirty miles, which disreputable horses, with some stray old rusty straps as harness, performed at a gallop in two hours and a quarter, brought them to the nearest station for a seven-hour journey to Rawal Pindi, and so back to Lahore. Leaving Lady Rosebery in friendly care, Rosebery and Ferguson started for a wild dash upon Quetta. At Sukkur, on the majestic Indus, the great railway bridge was still three years from completion, and they turned north to Jacobabad, all along the line coming in for festive Christmas celebrations. After various contretemps due to the season or the newness of the railway, and a long spell on an open truck in bitter cold, they were safely deposited at Quetta, and well looked after by the guardians of the frontier. Rosebery had the luck to have a discourse on the North-West Frontier from General Browne,¹ "commonly known as Buster Browne," the engineer officer who superintended all the strategic lines of railway, and made careful note of it.

On December 28th they started for the railhead, some eighty miles from Kandahar, and turned back to Kach, being the first passengers who travelled on the line, and finding "the creaking of the sleepers and the slight-looking bridges sufficiently exciting." A five-mile walk across country in the dark brought them to Kach, whence they started on foot the next morning, as from rotten ice riding was difficult, with the thermometer at 19 degrees. The walk, in its turn nineteen miles, finished up with the Chappa Rift tunnel of some two miles, with sublime views from the windows piercing one side overlooking the gap below. As the tunnel was lined with pointed stones

¹ Maj.-Gen. Sir James Browne, K.C.S.I., Bengal Engineers. Engineer-in-Chief Sind-Pishin State Railway 1884; Quarter-Master General in India 1889.

and feet were sore, it was agreeable to reach a train at the end, and to be landed at Sibi at 10 p.m. They found the town illuminated by "the Municipality," assumed to consist mainly of Colonel Bruce, the political agent, a "keen silent Irishman." The two inscriptions he noted were "Welcome Lord Rosebery" and "Income Tax hard." These in some cases had become combined, and after they had proceeded a short way some crackers went off, and the ponies in the carriage bolted, so that when they arrived at the principal decorations in the square it was at a gallop, with "the Municipality" and the honoured guest each sawing and tugging at the reins for dear life. However, all ended well, and Rosebery, from the roof of the political agent's house, thought "the little town a fairy scene, it was all howling desert seven years ago. One of the chuprassies with us had helped to build the first house."

The trip was over: they journeyed to Sukkur, thence paused at Lahore, were joined by Hannah Rosebery on New Year's Day, and reached Lucknow the next morning. Every Englishman sees Lucknow with a blend of pride and amazement, and Rosebery was duly impressed, though one mosque struck him as "a curious mixture of a place of worship and Cre-morne." Cawnpore followed, "altogether a worthy object of pilgrimage," and they proceeded to Allahabad as guests of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Alfred Lyall. "A lovely quiet day of pure enjoyment" (January 4th), Rosebery noted; and no wonder, with the delightful companionship of his host; and there were other congenial figures in Sir Douglas Straight, who had left British law to become an Indian judge; Mr. Allen, the agreeable proprietor of the *Pioneer*; and the Chief Justice, Sir John Edge. A few days later the party stayed at Benares, fascinated by the alternate splendour and squalor of the town, and by the river view—with something of Venice in it, with the palaces overhanging the ghauts along the Ganges.

They arrived at Calcutta on January 9th. The

weather was delightful, bright and not too hot. It was a quiet, uneventful week, punctuated by walks and talks with their host Lord Dufferin, by some races, by the usual viceregal dinners and dances, and by a visit to the Legislative Council, which reminded Rosebery much of a sitting of the House of Lords. A flying visit to Chandernagore was distinctive, with the tricolour sashes of the officials in evening suits and opera hats ; but the one failure of the tour was the ascent to Darjiling, where three days were spent in dense fog, with no glimpse of the famous mountain prospect. The only consolation was a visit to a tea plantation, followed by a visit from a "swarm of dirty good-humoured pedlars, from whom we made many purchases, Ferguson standing by like Judas with a great bag of silver."

The following week was spent peacefully at Calcutta, occupied with successive interviews with notable Indians and a service of the Brahmo-Somaj. The return to Bombay was on January 26th, and three days later the travellers left for Hyderabad—"full of character and beggars, a real native city, not too much veneered by Western civilisation." This accent was pronounced when Rosebery and Ferguson walked in the Indian quarter of the city, where English people seldom went, and were formidably stared at. In Hyderabad an Englishman was a stranger, not always a welcome one. The Nizam showed much attention, and Rosebery, not impressed by him at first, on further acquaintance recognised dignity and capacity in his small personality—an opinion which later experience by the Government of India confirmed. Salar Jung, Minister like his more famous father, was absent for the moment. The return to Bombay was followed by a visit of the men of the party, headed by Lord Reay, to the Portuguese settlement of Goa. Of this expedition Rosebery wrote a long, serio-comic account, in portentous English, narrating how Governor Reay carried to a successful issue the expedition partially undertaken by Vasco da

Gama and Albuquerque. The “topical” humour of this has necessarily somewhat evaporated ; but there is no mistaking the serious impression left by old Goa :

“ A hamlet of cathedrals in a forest. There is no trace of life : nothing but an arch which conducts to a city which no longer exists, and beyond the arch vast silent churches and a jungle of palm trees. Yet once it contained 120,000 souls. But fever was too potent for the city and it faded away. The fever—and the snakes—still remain.”

After two more days at Bombay, the party, with Lord Fife, started homewards in the s.s. *Verona* (February 11th). “ The ship is clean and empty, Hallelujah.” Plenty of incident had been crammed into these eleven weeks in India. Many influential and communicative people had been met, and many places visited in different ways characteristic of Indian life. No time had been given to sport, which is seldom at its best until a good deal later in the year. Altogether the tour was a thorough success. But Rosebery’s record of it does not leave quite the same impression of an awakened soul as does that of his Australian journey. Many Englishmen, when they visit India, feel that for the first time they are learning what the British Empire is. That consciousness was roused in Rosebery by the spectacle of the British race creating a new world out of emptiness. Perhaps he was less stirred by the thought of our succession in the continuity of Indian rulers :

“ How Sultan after Sultan with his pomp
Abode his destined hour and went his way.”

And this in spite of the keen historical sense which was always on the alert, in India as elsewhere.

The voyage was propitious, except for one day in the Red Sea when “ we had the sort of weather which the deceased Pharaoh once encountered, and which I thought was reserved for the security of an ancient race. A violent wind from the S.W.”

He got through a fine mixed lot of reading, generally at it all day: Gladstone's *Irish Speeches*, *The Tale of a Tub*, and the *Journal to Stella*, Hübner's *A travers l'Empire Britannique*, Lecky's *Leaders of Irish Opinion*, the *De Corona* in Kennedy's translation, some Burke, *La Guerre et la Paix*, and in a light vein *Pêcheur d'Islande* and Mrs. Walford's *Mr. Smith*.

After this uneventful voyage, the travellers reached Suez on February 21st, and journeyed straight to Cairo. Rosebery's brief experience as Foreign Secretary opened as many doors as he desired into official life during his sojourn of ten days, and he did not fail to take advantage of these opportunities. Egypt was settling down; but her finances had not yet recovered from the fabulous extravagance of Ismail Pasha's rule and the cost of military adventures in the Soudan. It was felt that unless the search for oil on the Red Sea coast proved richly successful, Egypt had no chance of meeting the enormous interest on her debt without aid, presumably a British guarantee. Ismail Pasha was an unfailing topic.

"If you find conversation flag in Egypt, if a dinner wane, or your company be dull, you have only to mention the name of Ismail to effect an instantaneous and refreshing change. 'I have searched Greek and Roman history, and all history indeed in vain,' said Nubar Pasha, 'to find a parallel. What became of all the money he spent? I have no idea.' I suggested that much went at Paris and Constantinople. 'I doubt if three millions were spent at Constantinople altogether.'

"... On the other hand, the Khedive told me that whenever his father went to Constantinople he spent millions, and Tewfik Pasha, the Governor of Suez, told me that out of the last loan of thirty million sterling Ismail only received five, the whole of which he spent at Constantinople in two months. The same authority stated that one of Napoleon III's Ministers received four or five million francs for giving the consent of France to the International Tribunals, and two others received pensions from Ismail Pasha. Blum Pasha¹

¹ At the Ministry of Finance. "An exceedingly agreeable Austrian with a strong sense of humour, who has been in Egypt 22 years. He would shine in any society."

told me that Ismail's Civil List was £1,300,000 per annum. When, however, Blum went to him at a critical moment to say that he must make some financial sacrifice, Ismail received him in the great room at the top of the stairs where he always sat. There were as usual only ten or twelve candles lit, though there were many chandeliers. When Blum had finished his appeal, Ismail said it was impossible for him to make any sacrifice,—‘ You see, even now, I can only afford these few candles to be lit out of so many.’

“ . . . This was at the period of his wildest extravagance. Once, Blum Pasha told me, he was at Vichy and sent to Cairo for two millions worth of Treasury Bonds (sterling). They were despatched to him, and a month afterwards he sent for two millions more, which were equally despatched. What became of all this ? When Ismail wished to add Darfur to his dominions, Nubar Pasha went to him and asked him if he knew about the country, representing to him what a harassing and undesirable acquisition it would be. ‘ Are there not five millions of inhabitants ? ’ inquired Ismail. ‘ It is believed so,’ said Nubar. ‘ Then at 10s. a head capitulation tax, that represents £2,500,000 per annum,’ was Ismail's only remark. ‘ That is the sort of man he was,’ says Nubar, in a sort of despair.”

The most sinister event of that sinister régime was the sudden disappearance of the all-powerful Finance Minister, Sadyk Pasha, known as the Muffetish, Ismail's factotum and confidant, and the possessor of a colossal fortune. As Rosebery put it, “ Wolsey and Sejanus were nothing to it.”

As the story reached Rosebery, when Goschen came to Egypt with M. Joubert, he refused to have any dealings with Sadyk Pasha, who wrote an angry letter to the Khedive, and was rebuked for its tone. Such a rebuff was a danger signal, and it was noted later that about this time Sadyk asked one of the principal European bankers if it would be possible for him to become a French subject. His friend guessed the reason, but asked why he desired it. “ I do not know,” said Sadyk, “ why it is, but I have a sort of feeling as if something were going to happen which might make it desirable.” A day or two later the

Khedive asked the Minister to come and see him at nine o'clock at the Abdin Palace. When he arrived, a brougham was at the door, which he entered at Ismail's invitation, who got in with him. They drove to the Abbassiyeh Palace. There they had some conversation in the hall, but Ismail presently said he must go for a moment into the harem. When he had gone, Prince Hassan appeared and told Sadyk that he was under arrest. "Why?" "I do not know: that is not my business, I am a soldier obeying orders." Next morning a Dahabyieh took the Muffetish up the Nile. From the moment he entered Ismail's brougham with his smiling master he was never seen again. Then came the part said to have been played by one of the best and most respected Egyptian Ministers, "thin, intelligent, and agreeable," according to Rosebery's description of him. The day after Sadyk's disappearance he set off up the Nile with Ismail's signet ring—a sign of full powers conferred upon him. He returned some time later with his arm in a sling. It was supposed that the jailers attempted to drug the Muffetish under his superintendence, and that a violent struggle ensued, in which the Minister was wounded in the hand.¹

Sir Evelyn Baring asked Rosebery whether this need prevent him from recommending the Minister for the K.C.M.G., as he had been on the point of doing when the story came across his mind. Rosebery declined to give advice, as he could form no opinion of the credibility of the story.

Rosebery had much intimate conversation on the future of Egypt with Nubar Pasha, the powerful Armenian Minister, with Riaz Pasha, a Turk of Jewish extraction, and with Moukhtar Pasha, the representative of the Sultan. Riaz held that Egypt should be left to herself, subject to the supervision of some Power, which he considered necessary.

¹ Rosebery did not note the story which was long prevalent in Cairo that, in his desperate struggles, the unhappy victim had bitten to the bone the hand of his former colleague.

“ I defined his view that there should be an European directing spirit but an Egyptian hand. He assented, declaring that some European Power should have a right of surveillance. But he would not have English Ministers ‘ as there could not be two captains in one boat.’ ”

The connection of Moukhtar Pasha, an agreeable soldier, with Constantinople was not immediately important.

“ He is supposed to have received but two telegrams from the Sultan during his stay in Egypt, both referring to a supply of delicacies for the Imperial table.”

But in a long talk he detailed the causes of alienation between England and Turkey :

“ He says ‘ *chose* ’ once in every three words.

“ There were half a dozen specific grievances, one the question of reforms in Armenia. The Porte acknowledges no such name as Armenia.”

Rosebery did not mince words in reply.

“ I told him frankly that if I were in office now I should be angry and hurt at the total want of gratitude of the Turks for our services in the Greek blockade, when we had prevented the outbreak of a war which could not have been limited, when the present friends of the Porte, the Russians, were actively intriguing the other way.”

The party left Port Said for Naples on March 4th, and after only five days of that paradise and its “ happy walks and shades ” in the always congenial company of Sir James Lacaita, sped on to Rome, where interviews with the Pope, the King, and the leading Ministers broke into the ordinary sightseer’s routine. Hannah Rosebery went on to France, and Rosebery paid brief visits to Vienna and Berlin, where he again spent most of his time at the Radziwill Palace, joining his wife at Paris, to reach England just before Easter and settling down at the Durdans for the month of April.

During Rosebery's absence abroad the two outstanding political events were the resignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Randolph Churchill, and the attempt to reunite the Liberal party by the meeting of Harcourt, Chamberlain, Morley, Herschell,¹ and Trevelyan at the Round Table Conference on Ireland. Rosebery wrote to his leader from the Suez Canal on his way to India :

November 12th, 1886.—“ I got a paper yesterday with the report of the Leeds meeting² which filled me with pleasure. The note of political thoroughness and of loyalty to yourself, the temperate earnestness of all, or almost all, the speeches made me think it one of the best of these political conventions. At the same time, I adhere strongly to the belief that your strength and the strength of the party lies in silence : that is, as much silence on the part of the leaders as is consistent with keeping the party in heart—good heart (Glynnese).³ What talking has to be done should be done by members to their constituents, in the sense of educating them. Meanwhile, let our governors have their fling. Randolph has I imagine exhausted himself for the present, and I suspect we shall soon perceive considerable fissures in the Tory surface. But let them have rope : I am sure little more is needed.”

Two months later he wrote from Government House, Calcutta :

Confidential.

January 11th, 1887.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ It may amuse you to have the innocent impressions of an unguided and uninstructed . . . mind as regards the position created by R. Churchill's resignation. We have only here some barren and possibly inaccurate telegrams to go upon, so that I may be in a fool's paradise.

“ It seems to me that the Government has received a shot between wind and water, and that even if there is not a mutiny on board, there are at any rate not many efficient

¹ Lord Herschell, G.C.B: Born 1837 ; died 1899. Solicitor-General 1880-5 ; Lord Chancellor 1886 and 1892-5.

² National Liberal Federation.

³ The Gladstone and Lyttelton families maintained a dialect of such expressions, thus styled.

hands left to work the pumps. They have got Goschen it is true, but they have bought him much too dear. They had him already, and he was quite as useful to them in a private capacity as he can be officially. But Goschen's adherence, when Hartington refuses to join, gives the Unionists much the same blow that Newman's admission to Romanism gave the Tractarians ; it justifies all the hard things said as to their secret tendencies. To my mind this discrediting and impairing the Unionist position is a fatally high price to pay for the pleasure of seeing Goschen on the front bench. (I am glad he is there as it seems a great step in the direction of an honest and high-minded Tory party which I long to see.) Then if it be true that Northbrook has been compelled to throw up the India Office by an angry clamour of the Tories who cannot bear to see a crumb or a fishbone distributed outside the Carlton, a lurid light is cast on the Unionist position to which the most zealous of that party can hardly blind themselves. They are in the position of beasts of burden, or strictly of Roman allies contrasted with Roman citizens : they may bear any amount of burden and heat, but are not qualified to receive the rewards. Surely this must leave a rankling sore in the Unionist relations to the Tories.

“ Then Salisbury exchanges Randolph as a leader for the respectable but inadequate Smith. Randolph becomes a bitter, dangerous, and unscrupulous enemy, who will not rest till he has overthrown the Government.

“ Lastly Chamberlain has found in these transactions an excuse for holding out an olive branch, and escaping from his difficult and almost impossible position.

“ The strongest government could hardly survive these disasters ; but this weakly infant can hardly be kept alive by all the wet-nursing of Hartington, or the bottle of Cross, or the Daffy's elixir of the soothing Smith.

“ We have a telegram which announces a conference between Chamberlain, Morley, Harcourt, &c., which you will bless but not attend. All this gives me sincere pleasure. I am confident that a common ground of action can be discovered, for I know your moderate and conciliatory frame of mind. And I think that the Irish having found themselves weaker in the constituencies than they expected will be satisfied with less than they were last year.

“ Forgive this long and crude dissertation, but I have no one here on whom to pour my impressions.

“ We are living in a splendid palace in a delicious climate

with perfect hosts. I feel myself a Stoic to be able in such a Capua to turn what I am pleased to call my mind to the affairs of that foggy and immoral island which you inhabit.

“Y. aff.,
“R.

“All this is for your own eye alone.”

About the same time (January 26th, 1887) he wrote to Reginald Brett :

“Here one watches your political crisis with a philosophy tempered by ignorance, with this minor advantage that one has to think out the situation for oneself, without having that trouble removed by the inspired surmise of the daily press.

“I could wish to see the Government either a stronger or weaker. In some respects indeed it could hardly be weaker. But I have always been a believer that the Jubilee year would not be a year of peace, and war on the Continent makes it desirable to have a strong government in England. Moreover the duration of Athenian Cabinets compares favourably now with that of British administrations and I am a little ashamed of my country. However, we can have no governments of average strength until this silent Irish revolution be accomplished ; and we should be grateful for the exiguous mercy of a government supported by 319 votes,—for I suppose we may deduct Randolph’s. Of course we shall rub through all this distressful series of complications as British good sense will rub through anything. But all the same it is not a bad moment to be perched on India’s coral strand. Indeed, if all we hear be true, Greenland’s icy mountains should be preferable to my native city and its snowbound fog.”

Rosebery went to Glasgow at the end of April, and spoke at the meeting of the Liberal Association (April 29th) “for $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours, appalling,” as he said. Ireland was his principal topic.

“He doubted reunion of the Liberal leaders, but had unlimited faith in the common sense of the rank and file. They were told, for instance by the Duke of Argyll, to forget party. The Duke could not forget party, because his party

was himself. But he would warn the Liberal Unionists that if they forgot their party too long, the party would forget them. After a general election a clear line would be drawn ; but though after being buffeted on one cheek the Liberals had meekly offered the other, the time might come when they would come to the end both of their patience and their cheeks. Then would come the final and total and permanent disunion of the Liberal party.”

Throughout the year Rosebery was active on many platforms. He was becoming a familiar figure everywhere, and was easily the most attractive speaker that could be secured, next to Gladstone himself. At Plymouth (May 20th) where there was an audience of 3,000, at Ipswich (October 5th) at a gathering at least as large, and at Castle Douglas (October 20th) when he spoke for an hour amid much enthusiasm, and at Edinburgh (October 5th) where Lord Spencer was the other leading attraction, Ireland was always the central subject of the discourse. The Ipswich speech called forth a long and bitter leading article in *The Times*, in which Rosebery was accused of condoning violence, and generally of presenting a mere travesty of Irish affairs. Before the Edinburgh speech he wrote to Spencer :

“ Do not disparage yourself by placing your utterances below mine. Nothing can be tamer or feebler than my orations. I speak worse and worse, while you speak better and better. I see no prospect of improving. I am in the very depths now about my speeches, whereas yours are the weightiest in many ways that can be delivered on this absorbing Irish question. You will have a splendid reception in Edinburgh, and I shall swing the censer by your side.”

It would be tedious, at this distance of time, to make any detailed examination of the series of speeches on Ireland which Rosebery delivered in this and the following year. The vexed problems of that day—the position of Ulster, the retention of Irish members at Westminster, and so forth—have found their solutions, good or bad, long since ; but in view

of the part played by the Irish Question in Rosebery's later years, his absorption in it at this time cannot be passed over. But it by no means represented his only contact with public life.

From May onwards Rosebery's intervention in the Lords' debates touched oftenest on Imperial affairs. On May 2nd he indicated the disappointment which the Australian colonies would feel at the rather colourless reply which was all that Lord Salisbury could give to a question about French action in the New Hebrides asked from his own benches ; and the same matter came up a day or two later, when the *Standard* had published what Rosebery called "the somewhat spicy details" of proceedings at the Colonial Conference. "New Hebrides papers are still not presented," he complained on August 1st, and finally on August 12th agreed to Lord Salisbury's plea for further delay.

He asked questions on the Anglo-Turkish Convention (May 23rd, June 28th, July 5th), and on Afghan affairs (June 13th). He favoured State-aided emigration of service pensioners to New Zealand, shook his head over the reappointment of Sir John Pope Hennessy after squabbles with his Council in Mauritius, and inquired whether an American bank had been established in China with a capital of two hundred millions sterling. Rosebery's most vigorous contribution to a debate was made to a discussion on the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill conducted with singular ill-humour by the Government party, particularly by the Liberal Unionist Peers. He followed Lord Northbrook, who had made a speech generally denouncing Gladstone and his adherents, with small reference to the Bill before the House. In the House of Commons such a speech would have been out of order, like a good many others in the earlier course of this debate. Rosebery indignantly denied the right of the majority to ask for an alternative policy to that of the Bill, which differed from all previous Coercion Acts in being a permanent altera-

tion of the law. He asked whether a great national franchise had been deliberately extended to Ireland with a full and steady determination to refuse the main proposition which would be brought back by the members elected under that franchise. Why did the Liberal Unionists reserve all their anger for those who sat on the same benches ? Lord Carnarvon had refused powers of coercion, quoting Cavour's statement that it was easy to govern in a state of siege, and saying that to do so permanently was impossible. Yet here was to be a permanent Act. The Liberal policy continued to be one of conciliation as opposed to coercion, by the remedy of Irish grievances.

On August 1st the Secretary for Scotland moved the second reading of a Bill strengthening his office by transferring to it many of the powers of the Home Secretary. It did not, however, promote its holder to a Secretaryship of State. Rosebery cordially approved, but thought that the office had suffered even more from the fact that there had been five Secretaries for Scotland in sixteen months.

Looking on at one of the Irish incidents in the House of Commons, he observed, "The conduct and manners of the House have become painful." John Morley told him that in the last Government Labouchere had strongly pressed to be made an Irish Privy Councillor, which would give him a footing in Ireland. Early in July a by-election at Spalding gave the Liberal candidate an unexpected majority of over seven hundred. One Conservative was not displeased :

July 3rd.—"Had an anxious conversation with Randolph. He did not disguise his joy over the election. If it were followed up by another victory the Government could not last three weeks. He then boldly asked me if I should feel inclined to join the 'National party.' I said I did not believe in it. 'But,' he said, 'if it were a success ? I acknowledge the difficulty, but could you not serve as Foreign Secretary under Hartington ?' I told him that I was not specially

anxious to be Foreign Minister, and that there were too many jarring personalities and principles in the 'National party' for me. I was delighted with our present position. We were not as we had been a flabby disconnected majority, but a compact minority united by a principle. 'But a principle you cannot put into a Bill?' 'That remains to be proved.' "

September 20th.—“Went to town to see John Morley. He told me that Chamberlain had wished to submit his new plan of Home Rule to Mr. G., who had declined, though expressing every wish to reunite with him. J. M. very low. He had seen Parnell, who had come over to J. M.'s views about settling the Land question and not leaving it to the Irish Parliament.”

“Broached to J. M., W. H. (William Harcourt) as probable and not undesirable P.M. He horrified, but promised to think it over.”

Mentmore, September 24th.—“Hartington came by 6 train. Hammer and tongs with him all night till 1.30 a.m. on Home Rule and politics. . . . H. not strong in argument, or sanguine, but evidently in sympathy with Tories. Says they do unprincipled things but are not animated with Liberal hatred to property. Pointed out Liberals not likely to love property if property deserted *en masse*. Has not much hope of Tory success in Ireland, but prefers the bare hope to an experiment of Home Rule which he does not think will work, and which he is sure will require remodelling of the British Constitution. As regards H. R. he cannot bring himself to more than a local government of a humble kind similar to anything done for England and Scotland. He acknowledged it was likely he would have to join the Government. He is in a very weary state of mind, but the rock on which he pillows himself is distrust and dislike of the G.O.M. He openly regrets his election address of last year as going too far.”

London, September 27th.—“Met John Morley. He had had a letter from Chamberlain saying he would give up public life if a satisfactory solution of the Irish question were arrived at, otherwise it was his duty to persevere! I pointed out to J. M. that the announcement of the settlement would run, 'The Liberal party is at length reunited. Mr. G. accepts all the Liberal Unionist points: in return for which Mr. C. retires into private life. J. C. has sometimes a grim turn of humour.' ”

A little later Rosebery found Harcourt most anxious to get Chamberlain back.

September 28th.—“Stead came and spent seven hours with me tête à tête, rather too much of a good thing, but he was very agreeable. When he regretted in the P.M.G. that our younger statesmen were not religious, Dilke wrote to complain that he, Dilke, was. Stead says that land purchase in Ireland must be settled by commune or parish buying and becoming landlord.”

Hawarden, October 11th.—“Went away at 10.30. W. E. G. came to the door. Said, ‘I hope you are well with Morley?’ I said, ‘We are twins, except in intellect.’ ‘I say nothing about intellect, but I am delighted to hear it in the days of Chamberlain and Randolph.’ He had previously said that Hartington had done more to push forward Liberalism than anyone else: in fact the pace would probably be too fast for Granville and such like, but not for me.”

But there were non-political engagements as well. Rosebery had always been interested in shorthand writing, and when an International Congress was held in London (September 26th), he delivered the Presidential address of fine quality, animated by illustrations gathered from his wide reading of political history and memoirs. There were delegates from all over the world, and they were greatly impressed.

He also spoke of technical education, once at the Society of Arts, with Hartington, one of its keenest advocates, in the chair and a galaxy of M.P.s and men of science round; and again in the industrial atmosphere of Keighley. Of this speech he wrote to Lord Spencer :

“I should have answered before had I not been bothered with leaving home and technical education, which latter topic produced a discourse from me so long and tedious that I fancied myself by Stratheden out of Hobhouse’s dam.”¹

¹ William, 2nd Lord Stratheden and Campbell (1824–1893), and Arthur, 1st Lord Hobhouse (1819–1914)—two serious and weighty speakers who did not cultivate brevity.

The Times, however, was kinder this time, speaking of the effective appeal made by him on a topic that interests all parties and irritates none.

The brilliance of the London season found its focus, of course, in the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee, favoured by the gorgeous sunshine of June 21st. Rosebery's devotion to his Royal Mistress was deeply chivalrous, and the following letters show that he wrote from his heart. Queen Victoria was really touched, as her reply makes clear.¹

HOUSE OF LORDS, July 7th, 1887.

"MADAM,

"I have not hitherto ventured to address to Your Majesty any congratulations on the auspicious occasion of Your Majesty's Jubilee; for I feared to intrude on Your Majesty at such a time, and was doubtful moreover whether it was proper for one in an unofficial position to do so. But now the ceremonial pressure of festivity has to some extent subsided; and I am informed that Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to receive communications from some of Your Majesty's former servants. And so I cannot resist the impulse to send Your Majesty a few humble lines. If in so doing I have offended I feel sure Your Majesty's constant and abundant kindness will excuse me.

"Last year on the occasion of Your Majesty's birthday I ventured to express my feelings on the memorable year that was then opening, being well assured that I should not be in Your Majesty's service when the Jubilee actually occurred. Now it may be perhaps permitted to rejoice at the unclouded consummation of this national and historical festival.

"Few even of those who are not Your Majesty's subjects could view unmoved the procession from the palace to the Abbey with its proud cavalcade of princes, its majestic representation of the sovereignties of the world, and the enthusiastic multitudes that hailed its passage: but fewer still that touching and magnetic moment in the Abbey when Your Majesty appeared alone and aloft—symbolising so truly Your Majesty's real position—to bear silent testimony to the blessings and the sorrows which it had pleased God to bestow

¹ These letters are printed in full in the *Letters of Queen Victoria*, 3rd Series, vol. i, pp. 338-42, but it is impossible to omit them from this biography.

on Your Majesty and Your people during two generations. And when later Your Majesty passed from the Sovereign to the Mother, the touch of nature which has brought Your Majesty into sympathy with the humblest of Your subjects added the supreme emotion to a matchless scene. None who beheld that spectacle can ever forget it : for it was history and human nature blended and compacted in a single glowing picture.

“ There appears to have been not the slightest failure or the most trivial drawback. All was worthy of Your Majesty and of the Empire : all has tended to strengthen and to deepen the foundation of a monarchy which overshadows the Globe, and represents the union and aspirations of three hundred millions of human beings.

“ I could not help feeling, as I gazed at the Thanksgiving, that Your Majesty’s mind must not improbably have returned to the past, and to those who are gone who would have rejoiced to witness and to share the triumph of that day. But when Your Majesty turned to the present it could hardly be in a spirit of dis-satisfaction with the august and genial Ceremony, or the universal and unaffected joy. Neither class nor party had any monopoly of that festival : it was as national and spontaneous as the loyalty which dictated it.

“ I humbly hope that Your Majesty has recovered the fatigue that could hardly fail to attend so much exertion, however pleasurable and gratifying ; and that Your Majesty may be spared to witness many years, which, though they will not be Jubilee years, will nevertheless be years of loyalty and thankfulness for the benefits and splendour of Your Majesty’s unrivalled reign.

“ I again hope that Your Majesty will excuse this intrusion and allow me to subscribe myself

“ Your Majesty’s devoted Servant and subject,
“ ROSEBERY.”

The Queen to Lord Rosebery.

OSBORNE, *July 21st, 1887.*

“ I cannot answer your beautiful and most kind letter in the third person, which is so formal,—I would at once have answered it, had I not been just starting for Aldershot, and had I not also wished to send you the accompanying Jubilee Medal which I hope you will wear in recollection of those never to be forgotten days, but of which I had none by me just then. You have indeed so truly and kindly described

those scenes and the very mixed feelings which filled my heart, that I would wish to thank you warmly for it. It is impossible for me to say *how deeply, immensely* touched and gratified I have been and am, by the wonderful and so universal enthusiasm displayed by my people, and by high and low, rich and poor, on this remarkable occasion, as well as by the respect shown by Foreign Rulers and their peoples. It is very gratifying and encouraging for the future, and it shows that 50 years' *hard* work, anxiety and care, have been appreciated, and that my sympathy with the sorrowing, suffering and humble is acknowledged.

“ *Alone, I did* feel, in the midst of so many, for I could not but miss sadly those who were so near and dear, and who would have so rejoiced in those rejoicings, above all *Him*, to whom the Nation and I owe so much !

“ Yesterday afternoon, I was most agreeably surprised by your kind and most valuable present, accompanied by such flattering words.

“ It is the beautiful little Miniature in its quaint setting, which you once sent for me to see, and which I shall greatly value, though I fear I have no sympathy with my great Predecessor, descended as I am, from her rival Queen, whom she so cruelly sacrificed. Still I am delighted to possess this exquisite gem, which I *intend* to *wear*.

“ In renewing my thanks,

“ Believe me,

“ Always yours very truly,

“ VICTORIA R. & I.”

Lord Rosebery to the Queen. DURDANS, EPSOM, July 23rd, 1887.

“ MADAM,

“ It has been the singular fortune of Your Majesty to make millions of people happy during this Jubilee, but none I think happier than I was on receiving Your Majesty's gracious communication yesterday.

“ It was not only the winning acceptance by Your Majesty of the little locket, and the even more gratifying intimation of an intention to sometimes wear it, nor yet the undeserved honour of the medal, but it was the eloquent condescension and simplicity of Your Majesty's beautiful letter that I can never forget.

“ I can well understand that Your Majesty should feel no very cordial affection for Queen Elizabeth, who, with all her force of character, seems to have been wanting in that

very quality of sympathy which has been the subtle and pervading distinction of Your Majesty's reign. By it Your Majesty has cemented the strength of this ancient Monarchy, for it has the magic prerogative of uniting the highest and the lowest, without impairing but even increasing mutual respect and regard. Never did I feel this so deeply as in reading last night Your Majesty's affecting words, which can leave me only with my life.

“I will not further intrude on Your Majesty except to hope what I cannot doubt that the pageant of to-day is worthy of the occasion, and of Your Majesty, and of the Empire.

“I have the honour to be

“Your Majesty's devoted Servant and subject,
“ROSEBERY.”

Lansdowne House was the scene of many festivities, some of which were attended by the foreign Sovereigns and Princes who had thronged to honour the most venerated of their caste. And it was the Roseberys' farewell season at the beautiful Adam palace of which they were the tenants. In July they became owners of 38 Berkeley Square, a fine and commodious *hôtel*, but naturally not graced with the unattainable distinction of Lansdowne House.

Much of the autumn was passed at Dalmeny, whence rapid excursions were made for some of the speeches that have been mentioned, and for a few visits to the country houses of friends. At one of these, Ashridge, Rosebery in a walk with the Prince of Wales pointed out to him the great danger of the present horizontal division of politics. The Prince, who some time before had given Rosebery particulars of his stormy conversation with Prince Bismarck, this time observed that Germany could put a million of men on her frontiers, but wanted another million.

Two of the children, Harry and Peggy, had been seriously unwell in the late autumn, but were out of danger before the year ended.

Since its inception in 1885 the Imperial Federation League had pressed on its activities in the face of

some opposition and mistrust. The Colonial Conference of 1887 was a signal for the League to stand up and speak for the nation. On July 6th of that year a banquet was given to Rosebery's cousin Edward Stanhope, who was the author of the Conference, and to Sir Henry Holland,¹ who had presided over it as his successor at the Colonial Office. Rosebery was Chairman, and was able to speak of the League as the established mouthpiece of Imperial sentiment in the country. He enumerated the four heads under which its activities ought to develop—political connection, defence, communications, and commerce. He asked for a guarantee fund, to be made up to a thousand a year, to carry them on for three or five years longer. It was, he added, a pleasant feature that Ministers and ex-Ministers met on the Executive of the League.

In 1888 Rosebery read a paper at the League's Council on its present position, and at the annual meeting he explained that it was not its present object to convert Parliament into a senate in which the Colonies should be directly represented. That might come, but it would be a revolution of the first magnitude. Federation did not imply a written constitution, but an Empire of which even the most distant parts are closely leagued together for common objects under a supreme head. It existed already, and it was their task to carry this idea to its fullest possible degree of development. It would not do to take a doctrinaire attitude: let the recent Colonial Conference be the first of a series, and let us take every opportunity of drawing our different commonwealths closer and closer. He added that so far the League had been largely concerned with Australian interests, and he was glad to see that Canada was beginning to take an active part in their proceedings.

At the banquet the same evening he compared the growth of the Empire to a game of chess, which

¹ (1825–1914.) G.C.M.G. M.P. 1874–88. Cr. Lord Knutsford 1888, and Viscount 1895. Secretary of State for the Colonies 1887–92.

had begun with castles, such as the acquisition of Malta, Gibraltar, and Quebec. Then came the scheme of colonising from Downing Street by knights and bishops. Highly competent gentlemen sometimes went out whose views were rather a relief to the Home Government than an absolute bounty to the Colony. But whatever the system, the Queen still remained; and lastly, where the pawns go the Empire goes. The emigrant who leaves these shores as a rule takes the Empire on his back, and the purpose of the Imperial Federation League was to make this a vivid notion. He repudiated the charge that the members of the League were "visionary dreamers." Their work was eminently practical, though animated by a great, lofty, historical, and Imperial sentiment. In conclusion, he paid a pleasant compliment to the Governor-General designate of Canada, Lord Stanley of Preston (16th Earl of Derby), a political opponent, but honoured for "the honest steady work he has done for the interests of the State."

In July, at a meeting of the League to welcome a Canadian statesman, Rosebery notes: "A Mr. Parkin of New Brunswick spoke with great force and volubility." This was his first meeting with the man whose name is most nearly connected with the Imperial Federation movement.

The Leeds Chamber of Commerce offered Rosebery an address of welcome in the autumn (October 11th), and speaking of foreign policy, he pointed out how closely it had become entwined with colonial policy, now that the Powers had begun a career of colonial aggrandisement. We now had neighbours everywhere all over the world. He favoured the extension of commerce by purely peaceful methods, and pointed out that the Colonies in proportion to their population took a larger share of British goods than foreign countries. Chambers of commerce could mature public opinion on the retention of colonies in the Empire, and if they did not want to be left alone in the world with Ireland, they must give a larger share

to the Colonies in our affairs, and give them a right to prompt the voice of England when it speaks abroad to a much greater extent than at present.

They must be prepared for demands, sometimes unreasonable. They must be prepared in some respects to diminish their own insular freedom of action on behalf of their giant offspring abroad. The cause called Imperial Federation, for want of a better name, was worthy of the devotion of the individual lives of the people of this country. If they would forgive him this little bit of egotism, he could say from the bottom of his heart that it was the dominant passion of his public life. Ever since he had traversed those great regions that own the sway of the British Crown he had felt that it was a cause for which anyone might be content to live : a cause for which, if need be, anyone might be content to die.

This speech, an advance, considering its date, in its conception of the true future of the Empire, evoked loud applause from the Leeds commercial magnates. Apart from its fine rhetoric, a reader of to-day will not deny it the merit of sound foresight. It may not be easy for such a one to realise how little in those years the average Briton thought about the Empire, and how general was the mistrust of those "visionary dreams" with which Rosebery and his allies were credited. As he observed in a speech at Glasgow, Lord Brassey, whom he was introducing to a Scottish audience, was not a visionary philosopher or a random rhetorician, but the most travelled of men of business, who had looked into every chink and crevice of the British Empire, and was a convinced believer in Imperial Federation.

During 1889 Rosebery was bound hand and foot by the London County Council, but he presided at the fourth annual meeting of the League, and made a considerable speech. He began with a triumphant notice of the progress of the League in Canada, which had not been thought a good field for their exertions. There were now eighteen branches in the Dominion,

and Ministers, Senators, and Members of Parliament thronged the Council. He went on to expose the fallacy of supposing the old country to be played out and to be seeking Federation in her own interest. On the contrary, she might be self-sufficing, with no relations with the Colonies, and he, for one, wanted more. His aspirations leant to the absolute predominance of the Anglo-Saxon race throughout the world. The United States had federated under the utmost difficulties, and there was no reason to despair of our future. Responsibility for foreign policy, and for defence, were the two practical considerations in view. He was sure that any plan for federation must arise from a colonial, not from a British demand, and the watchword must be equal social, moral, and political rights for every subject of the Queen, whether white or coloured, whether he lands on these shores or whether he lands in some other part of the Empire.

In replying to the toast of his health he reminded his audience that whereas we had started a colonial system with governments closely modelled on our own, we now had exactly changed. The colonial Governments had become much more democratic, and the movements that we take are a closer approximation to their forms of government. The Federation Question, therefore, had an incalculable influence on the future of this country.

Later in the year, Rosebery, on behalf of the League, asked whether the Government would convene a conference to report on the possibility of closer union. Lord Salisbury warily answered that they would receive with all respect any suggestions that the League might make for modifying Imperial relations, but they did not think it within their province to summon a meeting of delegates. If the Colonies desired to consult they could do so without help from us. The intervention of Her Majesty's Government might be taken to imply that they were prepared to make representations for establishing closer and more substantial union.

Undeterred by this shower of cold water, Rosebery rejoined smartly repudiating the notion of a conference summoned by the Colonies among themselves, both from the point of view of Imperial unity and the supremacy of the Crown. And he reminded the Prime Minister that five years ago Mr. W. H. Smith had moved a resolution demanding some form of federation to avert the disintegration of the Empire.

And when the City branch of the League met at the Mansion House (November 15th), a powerful platform, including Cardinal Manning, supported Sir Henry Isaacs, the Lord Mayor. Rosebery seconded the main resolution. The word "Imperial," he said, was not popular in the Colonies, because it represented red tape and bureaucracy, with the Imperial foot put forward and hastily drawn back.

He repeated his objections to producing a cut-and-dried plan. It was impossible now to introduce colonial representation, as such, into the House of Lords, the House of Commons, or the Privy Council, or to found a Customs Union. The method of conference was the right method of advance, and for the time being the League was prepared to limit its energies to seeing that conferences are constantly and permanently renewed. He went on to indicate the other necessary conditions for their success. The very best men should attend them, and they should be invested with all the authority and splendour which the British Government could give. They would not produce statutes, but recommendations.

" You may say that a congress that only meets to report and recommend has but a neutral task before it. I think that those who take that view hold a very inadequate view of what the utterances would be of a conference that represents a quarter of the human race, and represents the immeasurable opulence and power that have been garnered in the past century of her history."

The question whether Imperial federation is an impossible dream would be brought to the touch by

the adoption of this scheme. Every possible topic could be discussed with authority and weight. He looked forward to a time when the Empire would be almost self-sufficing, not perhaps commercially speaking, but in its foreign and external policy—a pledge of peace and prosperity not merely for our own race, but for all mankind.

It is clear, I venture to think, that Rosebery did no little service to the Empire by inducing his keen colleagues of the League to advance step by step, not quenching their enthusiasm, but keeping it under control.

At the fifth annual meeting of the League in the following year (May 22nd, 1890) Rosebery again touched on the Conference Question. It had proved to be as well that a Colonial Conference had not been summoned last year, because the minds of Australians were preoccupied by the movement for their own federation. On the other hand, the Fisheries Questions between the United States, Canada, and Newfoundland had accentuated the need for an Imperial foreign policy.

At the Canada Club (July 2nd) Rosebery took occasion to preach from the text of Heligoland, whose unimportant cession had caused heartburnings, a discourse on the impossibility of parting from Canada or Australia. There would be a feeling of regret, almost of degradation, which would shake the Empire to its very foundations.

All this time Rosebery had been diligent in attending Committee Meetings of the League whenever possible, in addition to the larger gatherings mentioned above. The successive appearance of such books as Dilke's *Greater Britain*, Froude's *Oceana*, and Seeley's *Expansion of England*, the product of very different minds, turned to the anxious study of Imperial questions many who had accepted the existence of the Empire as an everyday phenomenon, like the tides. There still survived thinkers, of whom Goldwin Smith was the most prominent, who held

that the dissolution of the Empire, and the independence of the greater Colonies, would be the saving both of them and of the mother-country. Goldwin Smith, an exile from the Oxford professorship which Disraeli had derided, had settled in Canada, and there published *Canada and the Canadian Question*, in which he urged the Dominion, if she did not wish to stand alone, to ask for admission to the American Union. Rosebery directly combated the Professor's arguments. His Australian experiences had not led him to dread an active spirit of disintegration there, but it was not absent, especially in New South Wales and Queensland, where an active minority, with a section of the Press, strongly advocated Australian federation as a step towards separation from Great Britain. Both in the Colonies and at home there was much general discussion on Defence questions, and in particular on the dilemma which seemed so real to some of the overseas statesmen, and has proved to be so purely academic—whether the Colonies might not be dragged into wars with which they had no concern. There was the corresponding dread here that the rash action of an individual colony might involve us in trouble with another nation. When Lord Salisbury received the League's deputation in 1891 he "was aware of the large portion of our foreign negotiations, our foreign difficulties, and the danger of foreign complications which arise entirely from our colonial connections," and in the following spring (March 23rd, 1892) Rosebery himself, speaking at the City Liberal Club, observed :

" Our great Empire has pulled us, so to speak, by the coat tails out of the European system, and though, with our great predominance, our great moral influence, and our great fleet, with our traditions in Europe and our aspirations to preserve the peace of Europe, we can never remove ourselves altogether from the European system, we must recognise that our foreign policy has become a Colonial policy, and it is in reality dictated much more from the extremities of the Empire than from London itself."

It will have been noted that the actual conditions for Imperial approximation remained undefined. The League was inclined to welcome the scheme of an Imperial Budget of Defence, to which Great Britain should contribute the principal share, the self-governing and Crown Colonies according to their capacity and their need for protection. Some favoured the imposition of special duties for this purpose. As we know, this project did not formally mature, any more than did the grandiose plan of which it originally formed part, that of a federal constitution for the Empire, with some form of government or council which would not detract from the local independence of each unit.

All this is ancient history, and many of the vexed questions found their answer in the course of the South African War, others in the Great War. But it should be remembered to the credit of the League, and of Rosebery's foresight as an Imperial statesman, that their hopes were based on periodical conferences ; on the admission to the Privy Council of Colonial Ministers, and of Colonial judges on its judicial side ; and on the appointment of representatives of the self-governing Colonies in an official capacity. The achievement of "Dominion status" (to use an unfortunate because undefined expression) has closely followed these lines. Finally, when we puzzle over the apparent eagerness of some Dominion statesmen to secure "the right of secession," we note that the authorised spokesman of the League wrote :

" Every responsible British statesman of the last half century has said that when the Great Colonies wish to go, Great Britain will raise no objection, that this view has been re-echoed unanimously by the press and by public opinion, and that no advocate of Imperial Federation, National Unity, or whatever other name we apply to British consolidation, has ever hinted at the union of self-governing portions of the Empire as anything else than a pact entered into voluntarily by communities free to choose or refuse as they please."¹

¹ *Imperial Federation.* (George R. Parkin, London, 1892.)

CHAPTER X

REFORM OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS: LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL: HOME AND FOREIGN POLITICS

THE early days of the new year were spent at Sandringham, with the enjoyment of four days of the lavish and varied Norfolk shooting. One of the party was a favourite guest of the Prince's, the Marquis de Galliffet, the Prince Rupert or Hodson of 1870, the hero of the last desperate charges of Sedan, when the day was lost past hope, and of the fine response, "*Tant que vous voudrez, mon général ! tant qu'il en restera un !*" It was known that on the hill opposite the old King, whose first battle had been Ligny, put down his glasses with the simple tribute of "*tapfere Leute !*" But General de Galliffet was also remembered as the pitiless executioner of files of defeated *communards* in 1871.

January 3rd.—"He told me after dinner that he was 57 and extremely ambitious ; that Boulanger could have walked into the Elysée at one time, but is now forgotten ; B. went into Bourse speculations at the time of the war panic with Mackay the American and won largely. Galliffet told Napoleon III in 1869 that the army was not ready. He acknowledged that the French hated England more than any other country, for which he blamed our policy in 1870."

But General de Galliffet was no Boulanger, and a few years later he played a fine part as Minister of War in upholding Colonel Picquart at the crisis of the Dreyfus trouble.

The political atmosphere remained chilly, both as between the parties and within the Liberal party. Arthur Balfour as Chief Secretary for Ireland had displayed unforeseen qualities of energy, and in the House of Commons maddened his Irish opponents by his supple skill in debate.

Early in February, at the Durdans, Gladstone—

“Talked of the future. Of Harcourt’s qualifications for leadership—his ability universally acknowledged, an equally universal determination to have nothing to do with him. From this I strongly dissented. The future black because of Chamberlain and Randolph : ‘I am reproached with being too sanguine, but on this point no one can be less so. I pity you, I pity chiefly John Morley as being in the House of Commons !’ We talked of the past. I said that if we had proposed a Royal Commission we should have carried our measure through the House of Commons after the pause of a year that it would have given us. He generally concurred.”¹

Early in the new year Rosebery believed that it was a propitious moment for grappling once more with the reform of the House of Lords. At the beginning of March he expounded his plan to John Morley, and a few days later (March 8th) collected his leading peer colleagues, Spencer, Kimberley, Granville and Ripon, for the same purpose. All of these except Granville were disposed to agree : then came George Curzon and St. John Brodrick,² who set forth their scheme for making qualifications of efficiency. Rosebery pointed out to them that this would not touch the

¹ It is interesting to compare Lord E. Fitzmaurice’s verdict on the Bill of 1886 : “It is not difficult to see, especially at this interval of time, that, quite apart from the merits of the question, the attempt to deal with Home Rule in 1886 was premature. A nation will make a great alteration of its constitution in one or other of two sets of circumstances. It will do so either after long and careful inquiry, such as preceded the Act of Union with Scotland, when time has been given for the opinion of the country to become convinced of the wisdom of the proposed change ; or it may be forced by adverse circumstances such as those which compelled the British Parliament in 1782 to grant complete legislative and judicial independence to Ireland, in the same year as that in which it had to submit to the final loss of the American Colonies and to unfavourable treaties with France, Spain, and Holland. Neither of these two sets of circumstances existed in 1886. The nation had not been prepared by previous discussion ; and in the external relations of the country there was nothing to compel an unwilling consent to change. . . . On June 7th, 1886, the Home Rule Bill was rejected on the second reading by a majority of thirty votes. The numbers were 343 to 313.” (Lord E. Fitzmaurice, *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii, p. 486.)

² Hon. St. John Brodrick, b. 1856 ; Secretary of State for War, 1900-3; for India, 1903-5 ; cr. Earl of Midleton 1920.

real weakness—the want of some basis of election. On March 11th he brought forward his motion for a Committee to inquire into the constitution of the House. Lord Dunraven had withdrawn a similar motion to make room for him. He spoke for an hour and three-quarters—“*a succès d'estime*” as he put it himself. He recapitulated firstly the circumstances of his motion of 1884, and the agitation against the House of Lords which followed the rejection of the Franchise Bill in that year. Recently Sir Michael Hicks Beach and Mr. W. H. Smith had expressed themselves in favour of Reform of the House of Lords by its own act. He dwelt on the omnipotence of the Government in the House; there were only some thirty in favour of Home Rule. The weakness of the House was the untempered application of the hereditary principle. It was a false analogy to say that the Crown would suffer by departure from it. Since the great Reform Bill the House had been converted into a party instrument, since which its control over Governments had ceased to exist. But the arguments for a Second Chamber were conclusive. He proposed a Committee to investigate, because the Government would not take up the business, and no unofficial individual could undertake it. Various plans would be before the Committee. He did not think the simple addition of Life Peers would be sufficient—“the mere zoological collection of abstract celebrities.” The Privy Council would be an ideal Second Chamber, even if the 109 Peers in it were alone nominated. But there might arise the same practical difficulties as with the creation of Life Peers. He would suggest that a delegation from the whole peerage, Scottish and Irish included, should represent the hereditary element, with safeguards for minorities. Then there should be an elected element, chosen by the County Councils that were just coming into being, by the larger Municipalities, or by the House of Commons, or by all three. Again, there was the principle of life peerages and official peerages, a valuable element when

limited in number. He would like to add representation of the Self-governing Colonies, and in every case would fix a proportion of the various elements.

He passed on to meet the formidable argument which Lord Salisbury had advanced in a speech in the country, that, after all, political power is a constant quantity, and any addition made to the powers of the Lords can only be at the expense of the Commons. Rosebery tried to show that a distinction could be drawn between increased power and increased efficiency, while admitting the possible disturbance of balance if a new Second Chamber were devised, not subject to the creation of Peers. To meet this objection there might be joint sittings of the two Houses, or recourse might be had to a suggestion of Mr. Bright's, that when a measure had been once or twice rejected by the House of Lords, the House of Commons might, in the language of diplomacy, *passer outre*. He disliked this last remedy, because he thought it would be used to excess.¹ Peers who were not selected for the new House should be freely able to stand for the House of Commons. In conclusion, he pointed out that it was the Conservative party in the country who were pressing for this reform at a time of political calm. Lord Wemyss, who followed, did not think it safe to trust the constitution of the House to the chances of a Committee, and reform should be on the responsibility of Ministers of the Crown. Lord Dunraven, ardent for reform, thought that a Bill should be introduced, and was prepared to do it. Lord Kimberley would have preferred a Government Bill, but would vote with Rosebery, feeling that the last Reform Act made some reconstruction of the House of Lords necessary. Lord Salisbury replied at length, with a compliment to the mover's remarkably able and eloquent speech : with its fertility of illustration, it should have been justified by laying on the table

¹ This, as we know, has not actually happened with the Parliament Act ; but we shall see later on that Rosebery's objections of five-and-twenty years back had not been overcome.

the measure to which it referred. It was a speech with a foregone conclusion, and in itself seemed to be the only Order of Reference to a Committee. He went on to challenge the assertion that the House was inveterately and permanently Tory. Mr. Gladstone's recent measures had drawn a new dividing line which unfortunately coincided with classes. But would Rosebery's proposals give a sound democratic basis to the House? A House of Lords with a Radical majority would be a very odd assembly. He agreed that black sheep ought to be excluded. But if certain peers were elected for life by the rest, what was to prevent an elected peer from becoming a black sheep? He favoured the nomination of a limited number of Life Peers, but doubted whether they would be very effective. Only former members of the House of Commons, or of the Bar, had the *robur et aes triplex* not to be extinguished by the most terrible audience a man can address. Lord Salisbury boldly concluded by asserting that no Second Chamber would answer in the long run, in this country, but one based on the hereditary principle. Its composition gave it the easy-going tolerance for accommodating itself to the difficult part of playing second to the House of Commons. A reconstructed chamber of active politicians would insist on sharing the powers of the other House. The Peers would be touching weapons of a terribly keen edge if they undertook to reconstruct that ancient assemblage.

Lord Granville wound up the debate. Nobody could really deny that the House was permanently Conservative, and he felt that Lord Salisbury's unyielding attitude was doing much to shake the position of the House of Lords in the country.

Rosebery's motion was defeated by 97 votes to 50, the minority being composed of Liberals of all shades, with half a dozen Conservatives.

This debate has been dwelt on at some length, partly because its subject captured Rosebery's special attention throughout the whole of his parliamentary

life ; partly because no final conclusion upon it has been reached by the country. It has been usual to blame Lord Salisbury for having neglected to grapple with it during the two periods of office when he was dictator of Parliament. The latter passages of his striking speech in the debate show why he never seriously attempted any reconstitution of the House of Lords. Lord Salisbury did not live to witness the passing of the Parliament Act, and it is possible to imagine how the lightning of his sarcastic wit would have played about that measure. It is too soon as yet to gauge the precise outcome of what was undoubtedly intended to be the prelude to another Act remodelling the constitution of the House. Hitherto its effects have not been notable in any direction. But at any rate, if Lord Salisbury were here, he could point to the complete failure, so far, to devise departure from the purely hereditary basis of the Second Chamber.

To conclude this year's dealing with the question, Rosebery took no part in the long debate on Lord Dunraven's House of Lords (Constitution) Bill (April 26th). It was a far-reaching measure, but was withdrawn on Lord Salisbury's undertaking to bring in a Bill for the creation of some Life Peers, and to make possible the expulsion of "black sheep."

The engagement regarding Life Peers was fulfilled on June 18th by the first reading of a Bill empowering the creation of not more than three of these exalted beings in a year, belonging to certain categories in the Navy, Army, Diplomatic or Civil Services. Two others of some special qualifications might, but need not, be created, making five in all as a maximum. Power would also be taken to expel a "black sheep" by the cancellation of his Writ of Summons.

Rosebery followed, and thought that in view of the wide discussion of reform in the Press and on platforms, and of the danger of complete want of sympathy between the two Houses, these small proposals made one feel that the subject is almost hopeless.

He thought that a system of delegation would answer far better than one of expurgation of the undeserving. He would support the Bill as a precedent for larger proposals. The Duke of Argyll—always on the alert to suspect any action of Rosebery's—asked what his noble friend was driving at by his speeches in and out of the House? It was pretty plain that he only wanted a Second Chamber that would always say "ditto" to the House of Commons. Rosebery had said that the House of Lords had obstructed Liberal measures. This the Duke denied, and proceeded to a long diatribe against Gladstone and Rosebery for their recent conduct.

The Bill came up for second reading in due course (July 10th), but it had been announced in the House of Commons that legislation in general would be postponed till the Autumn Session. Rosebery, as "a somewhat platonic admirer of the Bill," derided the carefully guarded categories of Life Peers, which would turn the House "into a sort of legislative Bath or Cheltenham, or, perhaps, if it is not disrespectful to say so, into a sort of legislative hydropathic establishment, where these noble persons will take more care of their constitutions than of the constitution of this House." He then rounded on the Duke of Argyll, who on the first reading had made his customary attack when Rosebery could not reply, having already spoken. And he went on to show how the Duke had attributed to him a series of statements that he had never made.

The Discontinuance of Writs Bill, whereby "black sheep" were to be cast out, shared the fate of the larger measure. Neither, as a matter of fact, reappeared in the short Autumn Session.

Otherwise, politically it was not a year involving any particular heart-searchings on Rosebery's part. Ireland boiled up anew with the fresh agitation over the charges connected with the alleged letter of Parnell's published by *The Times* in April 1887, and the remotely connected legal proceedings instituted in the following spring.

In a letter to Lord Spencer, written during his Italian tour, he showed his liking for what was afterwards known as the “step by step policy.” The Government were going to extend some local government to Ireland :

April 3rd, 1888.—“With regard to the Local Government Bill, I hope our people will support it in the main with ardour. We cannot, it seems to me, show too much enthusiasm for the democratic parts of the measure, as I understand it. I do not say this in the cynical belief that no course will cause more annoyance to the Tories. But I say it because in principle it seems a measure such as we should have wished to carry, though of course the House of Lords would have thrown it out. If my view be correct we are bound as honest men to promote the Bill. Secondly, as regards expediency, it seems to me clear that this Bill lays a basis for the Liberal party in England such as it has never had before ; while it makes Home Rule in Ireland a logical necessity in addition to being a political necessity which it was before.”

Then came the appointment of the Parnell Commission in July. Rosebery kept Ireland to the front in his speeches. At Inverness, on June 14th, he dwelt on the falsity of the Liberal Unionist position. If it was true that they were good Liberals in the green-room, and influenced the Government, why did they not show their Liberalism before the curtain and on the stage ? The Liberal party, having put its hand to the plough, would never draw back—where would the Liberal Unionists be then ? He had to recognise that the exclusion of the Irish members was not popular, so it might have to be dropped. He developed a most caustic account of the Tory-Parnellite alliance of 1885, and the attack on Lord Spencer. “History may record more discreditable acts ; it can hardly record any more contemptible.” He spoke bitterly of new instances of coercion, and of Mr. Dillon’s recent committal to prison by a magistrate, not by a jury. The whole of this speech vibrates with feeling, as much as any that he delivered on Ireland.

He reverted to the subject when addressing the

Home Counties Liberals at Willis's Rooms (June 21st), describing Mr. Dillon as a martyr to his great cause, and at Stansted in Essex (July 25th), dealing with the Statutory Commission, he accused the Government of purposely mixing up the inquiry into the letters with their general indictment of the National League.¹

At Bolton (July 28th) he again depicted the harsh incidents of coercion, and said that all the tentative schemes for Ireland, all the roads, local government, provincial councils, even separate Private Bill legislation—all would lead to Home Rule.

He thus did his duty as a loyal party man ; but he never permitted anything to stand in the way of attention to Scottish affairs, and when the Secretary for Scotland, Lord Lothian, brought in the Scottish Universities Bill, modifying in important respects the constitution of the Universities as designed thirty years before, Rosebery, while supporting the measure generally, delivered a series of studied criticisms relating particularly to the proposed powers of affiliation of other colleges to the universities, under undefined conditions. Subsequent speakers followed his example in this, and secured promise of reconsideration from the Government.

Meanwhile an entirely new vista of occupation and usefulness was opening out. From early days Rosebery had been moved by the spectacle of the vast unregulated city in a corner of which he and his like were congregated. Before his marriage he was well acquainted with Mr. Henry Solly, then the head of the Artisans' Institute in East London. But he carried on his more intimate friendship with William Rogers,² Prebendary of St. Paul's, and Rector of Bishopsgate since 1862. He and Rosebery corresponded regularly and candidly. Rogers, the contemporary of Queen Victoria, was a son of Eton and Oxford, where he had rowed for the University. As "perpetual curate" of a poor East London parish,

¹ The whole story of this sinister business is told at length in Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii, bk. x, chap. iii.

² Page 119.

for many years he had been an evangelist of education, cleanliness and the provision of rational amusements for neglected people. His alleged dismissal of doctrine by the phrase "hang theology" offended many worthy folk; but there was no doubt of his absolute devotion to good causes. Like other broad-minded ecclesiastics of the century, Sydney Smith, his close friend Jowett, and Charles Kingsley, he was enthusiastic in bringing the fortunate folk of the world to comprehension and into association with the less fortunate. Like Charles Kingsley, he was much of a sportsman, and could be excited by the racing triumphs of such friends as Lord Falmouth and Rosebery. But no man was less of a social sycophant, or more utterly independent in expressing his opinion to anybody, rich or poor. Rogers was greatly crippled by a painful rheumatic affection, by which he refused to be disabled; and once or twice Rosebery had been able to force him to a short spell of rest at the Durdans.

County Councils came into being by the legislation of this year, and the new County of London was carved out of Middlesex, Kent and Surrey. It was clear that the new body, taking the place of the somewhat discredited Metropolitan Board of Works, might assume functions of the weightiest character.

On December 1st Rosebery saw Canon Rogers, and intimated his intention of standing for the London County Council. "He to consider." The next day he met another active Londoner, and spoke of standing, preferably for Whitechapel. His candidature for the new body belongs to the story of the next year; but London had been much in his thoughts before its new scheme of government had come to maturity. The opening of the Swimming Bath at the People's Palace in the Mile End Road—the concrete expression of Walter Besant's vision—was on May 14th. Rosebery and his wife had made a gift of it, and the little ceremony was followed by supper at Toynbee Hall to meet "some working men, very pleasant and

interesting." And all excursions eastward were not official, for instance, on a Sunday morning :

July 1st.—"With John Morley to the City. We walked to Houndsditch and all about any nooks we could find. Stood on London Bridge, and went in reverence to see the house in Bolt Court, where Johnson lived and died. A happy reverent morning."¹

Before this the usual current of the year had been broken by a visit to Italy (March 25th), a day or two at Milan followed by a fortnight at Naples. A happy spell of irresponsible occupation, with many visits to the Rendel Villa, and an excursion to Taranto as the guests of Sir James Lacaita at his country home, which seemed to be just like what an old Roman farm was, with its culture of pollarded olive trees unaltered since the time of Varro, and the labourers dancing the tarantella in the afternoon. The cultured Sir James as a busy landlord was a new character. Three days at Rome, of no special interest, started them for Paris, which they found still restless, with Boulanger's intentions uncertain, and crowds in the streets "mainly good-humoured but irritable."

Rosebery went to Cambridge as the guest of Oscar Browning at King's College, to receive the honorary LL.D. degree (June 9th). In the morning he and Lord Salisbury had met at the Mansion House, urging the claims of the South London Technical Institute. The evening found them fellow-guests at the banquet at Trinity College—

"sat between Salisbury and St. Germans. Answered as one of the doctors designate. S. asked me how much I was going to subscribe to the South London Institute. I told him I had resolved to give what he did."

The next day at the Senate House, when he received his degree, he was able to note "not hooted, cheered

¹ Later Rosebery wondered whether this was the occasion on which Morley asked him to write the little book about Pitt, and on reflection concluded that the suggestion was made, but that he did not take up the subject till after 1890.

even. Balfour most cheered.” The following day he visited William Pitt’s rooms at Pembroke; saw the old Provost Okes, ninety, but keeping Eton as his chief interest; and attended Service at King’s, “ very fine—noble effect of great west door open at the end.”

There was a short summer visit to Sandringham. The Prince’s visit to Berlin had been painful :

“ He gave me a long narrative of what passed. Very indignant ; and a little put out, I think, by my silence and reticence. The clock struck nine (the dinner hour), and guests arrived while we were still in conclave.”

The Bismarcks were the main cause of the trouble ; and Rosebery’s special relations with them must have placed him in an awkward position at the moment.

Scotland, however, had a good share of attention this year. Flying visits to Edinburgh at the end of January and late in April were followed by a stay with John Hamilton,¹ at Dalzell, when excursions were made to Hamilton Palace and the Glasgow Exhibition. He was still farther north in June for the Liberal meeting at Wick. After receiving the freedom of the town—

“ At 1.30 to John o’ Groats. Never have I enjoyed an afternoon more. At the inn there was a deputation of one, or at most two, with an address the most northerly ever presented in Great Britain. Then we walked over springy turf to Duncanshay Head, passed over the Goes (great fissures made by the sea), sate on the edge of the cliff and watched Swona and Ronaldshay and the currents all smiling and sunny, usually so terrible. The gulls were a delightful addition. Then to look at the Stacks, and home by the beach composed of pounded or broken shells—picking buckies. Everywhere the simple people hoisted flags and cheered and showed cordiality.”

The spectacle of this ironical figure, half student, half sportsman, happily picking shells on the extreme

¹ John Glencairn Carter Hamilton (1829–1900). M.P. for Falkirk Burghs, 1857–9 ; for South Lanark, 1868–74 and again 1880–86 ; created 1st Baron Hamilton of Dalzell 1886.

northern shore, would surely have puzzled some of his acquaintance of southern lobbies and racecourses. A meeting at Inverness followed, and then by pony and launch to Assynt and Ronald Ferguson's northern home at Novar.

Much of August was given to grouse shooting, first with Lord Hindlip at Invermark, where his old school friend Newport at a drive, not on the moor but the forest, performed the remarkable feat of killing forty-six birds in one drive with a single gun, and running out of cartridges. Then to Mr. Arthur Sassoon's delightful lodge on the Seafield estate, Tulchan. The rest of the late summer and the early autumn were spent at Dalmeny, receiving no large parties, but a succession of friends from England, America and France, and with many outings with the children in gorgeous weather. On October 31st there was an Imperial Federation meeting in Edinburgh, with a forty-five minutes' speech from Rosebery.

There was a brief stay at Hawarden (October 11th), where he sat up till 1.30 talking to Harcourt and his son in the smoking-room, a haunt not frequented by their illustrious host. The next day (October 12th)—

“ Spoke to Mr. G. earnestly about his Leeds speech, urging a great statesmanlike broad speech, avoiding detail. He agreed, murmuring, ‘ It makes a very dull speech, but never mind.’ ”

“ Met Mr. G. coming from church at 8.50 a.m. and told him that as regards dullness of speech, that could be prevented by a very small spice of political and personal reminiscence.”

Two visits to the splendours of Longleat and Wilton, where the company was choice and the pheasants flew high, were followed by a short stay with Harcourt at Malwood, his cherished home in the New Forest. Rosebery had been going the year before, but the illness of one of the children had interfered.

The year 1889 opened by a dinner with Canon Rogers at Bishopsgate Rectory, to meet City celebrities, legal

and financial, with the City Police Ball to finish the evening. A few days later he addressed his first meeting as an independent candidate, not for Whitechapel, but for one of the four City seats allotted to the London County Council. In his short electoral address, dated January 1st, he declared his absolute freedom from party politics in this campaign, and indicated his belief that the Council would prove itself worthy of larger powers than were already conferred on it. But speaking at the Bishopsgate schoolroom (January 7th), with his staunch old friend in the Chair, he thought the enlargement of the Council's powers was a matter for Parliament, and that for the present it should devote itself to perfecting its organisation, on the three foundations of absolute incorruptibility, of personal efficiency, and of rational economy. The Metropolitan Board of Works, it should be recalled, had come under some suspicion of jobbery and "graft."

Three days later, at the Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street, Rosebery further pressed the need of abstention from party politics as such. The City, he thought, could maintain the leading position in London, and renew its youth, as the city guilds had done, by being awakened to their responsibilities. The City, where 50,000 slept but a quarter of a million spent their lives, should set the example, and let London save London. He answered with adroitness and humour questions from doubting hearers, and promised regular attendance at the Council, a point on which he was not unnaturally heckled.

At Houndsditch (January 16th), with a City Conservative in the chair, he reiterated his independence of party for the purposes of local government, and declined to state opinions on questions within the purview of Parliament. Nevertheless, these speeches were as fully reported in the Press as if they had been concerned with party issues. This was in some degree a personal tribute: many Londoners could not make up their minds whether the new Council was going

to be really a dominating municipal authority, or only the Metropolitan Board in a fancy dress. Polling was on January 18th. Sir John Lubbock, a famous City figure, combining fine cultivation with a great position in business, was returned at the head of the poll with 8,976 votes. Rosebery followed with 8,032, and was warmly received at the declaration at the Guildhall. The City Council, with the affability of the aged to the young, had lent the infant County Council the Chamber at the Guildhall one day a week for three months. The first meeting, of two hours, was inconclusive, and ended in an adjournment; but the second, also of two hours, and a "jarring debate" as he put it, ended in his election as Chairman by 104 votes against 17. Some of the minority, men who to-day would be Left-Wing Socialists, were discontented at the election. They did not want an ex-Minister, and a wealthy man, holding that all officials of their body should be its paid servants. But it was a small minority and, the election once over, Rosebery soon secured the personal goodwill of most of its members. This was the first occasion on which it was publicly important that he should make friends with people of different upbringing from himself and with tastes and habits foreign to his own. He had been doing it all his life, for no man had less of *morgue*—to use a foreign expression difficult to render exactly into English—nor did his special brand of shyness and reserve give that appearance of *morgue* by which shy but genuinely modest men are sometimes misjudged. He got on just as well with a Scottish labourer whose native wit supplied the place of book-learning, as with a poor student whose life was centred in his books, or with a bookmaker whose only book was his own. In a way it was a singular gift. Most often those who are so happy as to possess it win their way by an openly natural bearing, and by seeming the same to everybody. A man of close repression, like Rosebery, rarely so shines. His was an individual power of suiting not only his conversation, but his

whole identity to the company with which he was in sympathy. His sympathies were numerous, and his toleration was large. There is amazing attraction in a man of first-class intellect who, *in loco*, is quite indifferent to the intellectual equipment of the hour's companions. As Gibbon said of his society at Lausanne : "I am too modest, or too proud, to rate my own value by that of my associates ; and whatsoever may be the fame of learning and genius, experience has shown me that the cheaper commodities of politeness and good sense are of more useful currency in the commerce of life." Most of us have known two or three such social philosophers, but I have never quite seen Rosebery's equal in this respect. Not that he ever suffered fools gladly, or endured boredom for long, for he showed remarkable skill in slipping away from uncongenial surroundings when unrestrained by shame or duty.

Thus did Rosebery start on his voyage of municipal discovery, for discovery it certainly was. The London County Council came into being, overshadowed on the one hand by the majestic traditions of the Guildhall and the Mansion House, and somewhat tarnished on the other by the recent ineptitudes of London local government. When the full Council met, there were no established rules of order for a body of 137, too large for committee procedure, and barely large enough to accept the discipline of a legislative assembly. Then some twenty committees had to be formed. Rosebery's absorption in the work of these was no little surprise to the Council and to some of his friends. Charles Fox, asked at St. Anne's Hill why he was doing some laborious and monotonous work in the garden, replied, "Because I am a very painstaking man." Rosebery shared some of Charles Fox's tastes and foibles ; but he too was a very painstaking man.

From February 13th, committees met every day, sometimes sitting for five hours on end ; and now and then two or three met consecutively. The notes

of these consecutive days are instructive, just as he jotted them down. Before his election he had pledged himself to a Liberal meeting in the Edinburgh Corn Exchange. There were 4,000 people present, and a row of Scottish M.P.'s on the platform. The story begins on the previous day :

February 18th.—“ Committee of Council Meeting at 12 till 4.30. Then to Harcourt.”

February 19th.—“ Left by 10 train for Scotland. Arrived at Edinburgh at 6.30. Crowd. To Royal Hotel, where H. Then with her and Lord Hamilton to meeting. Spoke for one hour 20 minutes. T. P. O'Connor spoke for 30 or 40. At 10.20 left meeting for London.”

February 20th.—“ Arrived in London. Bought a horse at 9. To John Morley at 11 and walked with him. Attended Metropolitan Board of Works Parks Committee.”

“ Gave dinner to about 20 of the Opposition leaders. Mr. G. fresh from Italy very well but voice husky.”

“ To Durdans by last train.”

The next day he was back in London, attending committees in morning and afternoon. This was an unusual rush ; but he was always tempted to try a splendid constitution too highly. Possibly, but for the calamity that soon broke up his home, he might have done so with impunity for many years.

Four-fifths of the Edinburgh speech were devoted to Ireland. He made excellent play with the effort of the English minority to excite Protestant opinion in Scotland against Irish Catholics :

“ You are familiar with our visitors from the South, the sort of gentleman who in the railway carriage between Berwick and Perth thinks it his duty to assume a kilt. I have observed that in the same way it is customary for the random Unionist who visits Scotland to assume as he passes the border the aspect and guise of a beleaguered Protestant.”

The whole speech was full of banter, and concluded with a grave appeal for Imperial Unity.

In London relations with the expiring Metropolitan Board were at first difficult, and it fell to Rosebery

(March 20th) to give three instances in which the County Council, still a provisional body, had been treated with neglect and contempt by their moribund predecessors. Consequently the emergence of the Council from its chrysalis stage could not be delayed ; and on March 21st, meeting at the Board room of the extinct body in Spring Gardens, it fell to the Chairman to review for his colleagues the work done in their provisional stage. The Metropolitan Board had failed in collective courtesy, but their Chairman, Lord Magheramorne, had been most helpful. They themselves had found how little they disagreed, and that they could trust each other. It was altogether a very cordial gathering, and of good omen. The Council continued to hold its weekly meetings at the Guildhall until April in the following year, when the Chamber at Spring Gardens was reconstructed, but the latter building housed most of the Committee meetings. In May, a salary of £2,000 a year was voted to the Deputy-Chairman, it being thought convenient to appoint a salaried officer under this name in the first instance, instead of a Clerk instituted with a permanent title.

Mr. J. F. B. Firth, M.P., a man of large municipal experience, was first appointed, but he died in the early autumn. Rosebery paid his memory the high tribute that, having given up his position as leader of a party to become the servant of the Council, he had disarmed every antagonist, and shown absolutely unrivalled capacity for the place he filled.

The Improvements Committee was keenly active, and wished to begin the widening of the Strand by clearing the south side of Holywell Street ; Rosebery, with excellent foresight, pleaded for a large and comprehensive scheme, though trusting that preliminary plans should be lodged by the end of November. This would show that they were at work, and meant to take power to improve London. There were one or two personal disputes, some of them acrid, over loans and contracts, but the chief excitements of the

autumn were connected with licences for music and dancing. At the first meeting at which the Council sat as Licensing Authority Rosebery, for once making a regular speech, reminded his colleagues that they were not meeting as a popular representative body for debate, but in a quasi-judicial capacity, and should endeavour, without the spirit of harmless repartee, to arrive in a spirit of dignity at a resolution on the very arduous problems to be submitted to them. Several bodies had wished to send deputations, but the Council would have had to spend days in the blameless and insipid occupation of receiving them. The appeals from the Licensing Committee were mostly granted. They had secured the incomparable services of Sir Charles Russell,¹ and Rosebery observed with pleasure how he recited music-hall songs, with the same modulation he might have used for Tennyson. In announcing the Council's decision Rosebery paid compliments to the Licensing Committee, who had undertaken serious exertions (in attending music-halls) when others were endeavouring to obtain rest and recreation elsewhere. He could see nothing to laugh at in this tribute. He also praised Sir Charles Russell's conduct of the principal case, and went on to speak of the standards of wit and taste that obtained at music-halls. If they were going to insist on a higher standard, they ought to give warning of this intention to the proprietors. It would not be fair first to condemn persons for maintaining the existing standard because they wished to establish a new one, thus causing injury and injustice to innocent parties. In the second place, he dreaded going beyond the temperature of public opinion in these matters. Public fastidiousness had greatly increased since Thackeray wrote about the "Coal Hole"; and if they tried to outstrip popular progress there was risk of reaction, which would cause the very evils they were trying to eschew.

On November 7th, at the Guildhall Statutory

¹ (1832-1900.) G.C.M.G. M.P. 1880-94. Lord of Appeal and Lord Chief Justice 1894.

Meeting, Rosebery was unanimously re-elected Chairman amid a chorus of grateful praise. He replied congratulating the Council on its neglect of political considerations. His only complaints were, first, that the Government had declined to meet, by a simple Act, their distinct needs as the London Council ; secondly, that they had been badly treated financially, losing the old Coal and Wine dues of London without receiving the promised compensation to the rates ; and thirdly, that a dead set had been made against them by the public, and by the majority of the Press. Superior people preferred the classic quietude of their predecessors, that slow but deep stream. Nevertheless, in their short stormy life they had gained a great deal of *esprit de corps*. He spoke of the future County Hall that would have to be built some day ; meanwhile, they would be regarded by their more splendid successors as men who in difficult circumstances endeavoured to do their best. For himself, he asked that his re-election might hold good only till the summer recess, not until that time next year. To carry on the tale of Rosebery's first connection with the County Council, Council and Committee Meetings continued congestedly till December 17th, when the Council met at noon and cleared off arrears till 7, enabling him to catch the 8 p.m. train from King's Cross to Edinburgh for the winter holiday.

When the Council reassembled (January 14th, 1890), there was a curious dispute over the proposed municipal welcome to Mr. H. M. Stanley, just returned from his famous expedition in search of Emin Pasha. Mr. John Burns did not question the traveller's ability or pluck, but he had been responsible for the death of hundreds of human beings when trying to get the 160,000 tons of ivory which Emin Pasha had gathered. The reverend gentleman who had suggested the welcome complained that his own Christian character was being aspersed by these comments. A long discussion ensued, with Rosebery refusing to admit any points of order in what one of the speakers

called the most disagreeable discussion into which the Council had ever entered. The motion was finally withdrawn ; but one can picture the fires which would have blazed under a weak or excitable chairman. Humanity is the most intoxicating of sentiments—*bhang* or *ganja* in a controversy.

There was much discussion (March 14th) over the proposed Blackwall Tunnel, a legacy from the Metropolitan Board, and it fell to Rosebery to close the debate in a closely divided session of the Council. He thought there was something of a pledge to East London for its construction, but had long hesitated because hundreds of acres of marshland would appreciate in value, possibly fifty-fold, and there could be no provision for betterment in the rate-payers' interests. If they could secure this, it would be right to wait, but he saw no prospect of a Parliamentary measure, and had come down on the side of proceeding at once. In the event, this course was favoured, but only by a majority of nine.

At a later meeting (March 25th) the scheme again only scraped through by small majorities.

Rosebery's unfailing attendance at Council and Committee meetings went on till July 16th, when his resignation was handed in, and the Vice-Chairman, Sir John Lubbock, said all that an accomplished speaker could say at such a moment. Three leading members followed, including the Deputy-Chairman. All of them laid special stress on his work in the Committees, besides, of course, referring to his brilliant chairmanship. Said one : "The whole work of creating committees and forming and marshalling the staff was done with the instincts of a man of business and the judgment and authority of a statesman. His watchfulness of the smallest detail in committee absorbed his time to an extent hardly appreciated." Another declared that a few months ago the Chairman had found them a mere collection, so to say, of atoms, and it had been his labour of love to weld those atoms together, apart from opinions, into one harmonious

whole, and to convert them into a machine of no mean working order. The Deputy-Chairman dwelt on Rosebery's willingness to give help and guidance to individual members, and on his ubiquity in and out of the Committee rooms, and his power of instantly taking up the questions there under consideration.

It was estimated that, from the opening meeting to his last appearance as Chairman on July 8th, he had presided over the Council forty-four times, and had attended 280 committee meetings. It has been noted above how mischance dogged Rosebery's footsteps in his successive admissions to political office : to vary the metaphor, his boat was never borne on the rising tide. This time fortune was kinder, for though the difficulties were many, in overcoming them he attracted universal admiration and applause. It is not too much to call it the truest success of his whole career ; a success won in a minor field, if you will, but a success unalloyed by any jealousy among colleagues, or any misapprehension of his motives or of the purposes for which he was striving. Not least, he was given the chance of making friendships which would not have blossomed otherwise, but which bore fruit for many years. His coadjutors in office have been named, as has John Burns ; but there were others, like John Benn, an embodiment of London energy and observation, with whom intimacy increased as time went on.

The main current of life through 1889 flowed on, though more slowly, past the great central shoal of County Council work. To anxious gazers westward the murky atmosphere of Ireland seemed to grow somewhat clearer. The merciless exposure of the Pigott forgeries in February—which the Government endeavoured to counter by insisting that, after all, the Irish leader and his band had applauded intimidation and had not denounced crime—was followed by a mutual effort to forgive and forget on the part of Liberals and Home Rulers. There was an Eighty Club dinner (March 8th) with Frank Lockwood, the most popular of Liberal lawyers and wits, in the Chair.

“ Spencer, as guest, spoke for an hour with an interesting statement as to his change in 1885 and 1886. Then Parnell asked for, and made an admirable speech. I proposed vote of thanks. Insufferable heat. Eighty ladies lined the room. Charles Russell next to me : introduced me at once to Parnell, his guest on the other side. Then Spencer introduced and shook hands. A striking occasion.”

On May 17th the Prince and Princess of Wales dined at 38 Berkeley Square :

“ The Princess told me she should like to go to Dublin, as she liked the Irish. The Prince told me it was all premature, but that he thought the right Prince to go in, say, a year was the Duke of Connaught. I told him it would be fatal to mix up Royalty with the present régime—until it had at least been confirmed by another general election.”

The general result of the Parnell Commission’s findings was beyond doubt the progress of public opinion in favour of Home Rule. The political history of the year, with the steady gains of the Opposition in by-elections, is fully narrated in the *Life of Gladstone* and elsewhere. With the rising tide, Rosebery was anxious that the course through the difficult channel into harbour should be charted beforehand, as is shown by the following letter to his leader on the subject of nominating a small committee of Liberal hydrographers. Gladstone had written dubiously on this expedient.

1 FERDINAND STRASSE, HOMBURG, August 11th, 1889.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ I was greatly pleased to receive your letter this morning. . . . As regards the Irish Question, I would urge against your passive position that the committee is needed not merely on the ground of preparedness for the crisis when it comes, but as regards the party. The party is in a somewhat critical condition. There is a tendency to follow any Apollos who announces that he is in possession of the true doctrine ; a disposition to cavil at the front bench, and also a movement for rather postponing Home Rule to vague Socialist schemes. I am all for the combination of domestic reform with Irish

policy, but I am not for the obliteration of a definite cause to which we are pledged by vaporous views which have at present no ripeness or consistency. I am all for the free play of individuals in the party, but not for chaos. And I believe that nothing would restore faith and discipline more than the knowledge that the late Cabinet or a part of it were maturing details of Irish policy and measures.

“ And whereas you yourself have limited the field of your future operations, the party would feel that this subject to which you devoted yourself to the exclusion of other topics was receiving your strict attention. This is no mean gain : but we should further demonstrate that the cause, if in the background, was in the immediate background, and ready to take the field at the first opportunity. Again, it is clear that the Government must deal with Irish local government. They may even dissolve upon it. They may bring in a Liberal scheme, including perhaps provincial councils or a central board (like Chamberlain’s) but stopping short of Home Rule. On this they may go to the country and say : ‘ Here is our scheme, uniform, and applicable to England, Scotland and Wales : giving Ireland all that can be given short of creating a separate State. What is the alternative ? The bill of 1886 is dead, disavowed by some, amended by others. What else is there ? ’ If Ireland then be quiet, if trade be good, if administration be generally adequate, such a course might damage us more than I like to contemplate.

“ What you incidentally say about jealousies is a strong but not insurmountable objection. We could either (1) remit it to the Committee which aided you in 1886 ; or (2) we could form two committees, one for land and the other for constitution, which together might include all the ex-Cabinet ; or (3) we could subdivide the bills and have committees on the different parts ; or (4) we could strain the bills through two or three committees, each so to speak affixing their marginal notes ; or (5) a small committee might first go through the Home Rule Bill and send round the result in a box for individual annotation. In all cases the result to come before you for your final pronouncement, and, if you thought fit, the convocation of a Council.

“ What you say as to your habit in the preparation of your great measures is undoubtedly true and very remarkable. But this is not a Bill. It is rather in the nature of what would be called in the United States a constitutional amendment. It involves the greatest principles of constitutional

law, and is worthy of a conference such as that which met to lay down the relations of the different American States to each other in 1787 (I think). As we are not likely in this country (though it is not impossible) to adopt so large and dignified a procedure the next best thing is that those who are responsible for the proposal should turn it over and mature it : not individually, for then it will never be done, the stress of present politics being too great, but collectively and under an impulse from yourself.

“ I do not think it would be fair to ask you to preside at any preliminary committee : you have earned exemption from such drudgery. But after conference with Parnell you might well address a paper to your colleagues inviting such a committee or committees, and giving indications both of your views and of Parnell’s.

“ Has the time not now arrived, by the bye, when you might invite Parnell to Hawarden ?

“ I am not losing sight of the value of Irish co-operation : but for their sake and ours it should be no more, it should not be amalgamation. And I believe it would cause pleasure to them if they knew that the Irish question was still employing the best energies of the late Government, while I am sure that in the country it would impart confidence to our scattered congregations, and strengthen followers who are bewildered as to the scheme of 1886.

“ I do not moreover underrate the force of what you said to me as to the future bill necessarily being adapted to the temper and exigencies of the moment at which it has to be produced ; I less than any, for I believe the longer it is deferred the more it will approximate to the federal principle. But that does not seem to me to countervail the advantage of having on record the edition of 1889-1890.

“ I must close this interminable letter without exhausting my arguments. I will only add that if there were one small committee it should consist of Herschell, Spencer, Harcourt and Morley. All I think are generally favourable to the idea, and would serve : nor could that selection excite jealousy. Spencer is here, and I shall see him to-day, and take the liberty of showing him your letter. But I will not wait to see him before despatching this dismal volume ; though you know it is sent with complete deference to your unrivalled judgment and experience. . . .

“ Yr. affly.,
“ AR.”

At Norwich on April 12th, and at the Colston Banquet at Bristol on November 13th, Rosebery spoke on Ireland. The first of these occasions—"I spoke for fifty minutes, I fear dully. 7,000 people"—was almost unpunctuated by a laugh, an unusual event. It was a grave indictment of English government in the past, and a condemnation of the Union, almost solemnly worded. At Bristol he also spoke bitterly of the "part of the Constitution that was sown in corruption and raised in dishonour," but the speech was full of deft hits at the Liberal Unionist dissentients. Perhaps they were represented at the banquet, for he noted: "A fine fellow in the chair,—the Rev. U. R. Thomas,—but they were all Thomases."

In six weeks the crash came.

Journal

December 28th.—“O’Shea’s suit against Parnell announced.”

Foreign policy had to be watched, whatever other preoccupation might be present or impending. Rosebery wrote to Mr. Gladstone on January 15th :

Confidential. 38 BERKELEY SQUARE, January 15th, 1889.

"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

"I ought long ago to have answered a kind letter from Mrs. Gladstone; but I am in a fair road to become a vestryman, which takes up a good deal of time. But John Morley has brought me a letter from you which turns out my epistolary hose on to you.

"I am in truth rather dismayed at your idea of speaking your mind about the Italian alliance with Germany.¹ Now is this necessary? I remember when I took the Foreign Office you said to me that the important matter was to keep foreign affairs from disturbing us in England, where we had a great enterprise on hand which would fully occupy our energies. Does this not apply now with equal force? Have we any need to raise further animosities against us? Your allusion to Austria produced a strong feeling of hostility to

¹ Mr. Gladstone was preparing an article on Foreign Politics for the *Nineteenth Century*.

us in 1880. But if you make this declaration of hostility to the Italo-German alliance, you will range against us Germany and Italy besides (for the alliance is popular in Italy,—at least in the main). All this we might disregard if it were your duty to make it. But is it your duty ? I admit that your past services to Italy give you a *locus standi* in regard to any advice you may think it right to offer her. But from even your elevation is it judicious to offer suggestions to her about her foreign policy ? How should we relish it in England if a foreign statesman were to offer us advice or remonstrances about our alliances ?

“ Again, could your utterance have any effect ? I think not. Supposing you carried half the nation with you you could not extricate them from their alliance. It is as I believe for a fixed time—at least the last one was.

“ Again and finally, is it worth while to add to the divisions or causes of division in the Liberal party here a difference on foreign policy—more especially when that difference does not affect ourselves ?

“ There are many Liberals I think who would be of opinion that Italy has acted wisely in entering upon this alliance, and could not well otherwise have secured her own safety. But whether there be many or not, there are some ; and what counterbalancing advantage would be obtained by your declaration to weigh against the alienation of even a few members of the party ? Forgive me if I have written bluntly and strongly in favour of non-intervention on this occasion. It is because I feel strongly in the matter, and am anxious to avoid what I cannot help thinking would be a grave mistake.

“ Yrs. affly.,
“ AR.”

38 BERKELEY SQUARE, January 24th, 1889.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ Many thanks for your letter and for the generous spirit in which you accept my remonstrances.

“ I admit that I raised questions which cannot be discussed in a letter. But my excuse must be the deep feeling I entertain that even from yourself an expression of opinion on this subject would be less likely to bring peace than a sword.

“ I do not in the least wish you or England to stand under the shadow of Bismarck, and at this moment there is

little likelihood of this nation assuming that position. But Europe is a powder magazine, in which a spark, even of genius, may have effects impossible to calculate.

“ That is all I have to say. *Liberavi animam meam*, and I am quite satisfied to leave the matter to your better judgment, now that my side of the case is fully before you.

“ Y. affly.,

“ AR.”

When the article was in print, he wrote :

Private.

SPRING GARDENS, S.W., May 8th, 1889.

“ MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

“ It is very good of you to refer your article to me. It seems to me that you have avoided the danger which I feared. At the same time I still retain my own opinion that Italy could not in the present state of Europe stand alone, and that her relations with France are more uneasy than you judge them to be.

“ Two other points strike me. It is possible that the Italians may dislike what you say about torture, as being insufficiently corroborated : though I am aware that you have already touched on the subject. The other statement you make which fills me with surprise is that the priesthood are Italian and not Papal in their sympathies. I know nothing for or against, and so I do not doubt its accuracy, but it is startling.

“ Forgive these free remarks on your very interesting article.

“ Y. affly.,

“ AR.”

In the House of Lords there were no debates on foreign affairs demanding his intervention.

The friction between the British and German Courts was marked in the early months of the year. Rosebery was received by the Empress Frederick at Buckingham Palace (February 25th). She told him how King Frederick William IV used to say of her husband, “ This is my successor, for my brother can never reign.” “ She was pleasant and soft,—wept once.” But it was not only sorrowful reminiscence. “ ‘ Your friend Herbert has it all his own way now: he has got rid of us.’ I took the opportunity of saying

just afterwards, 'The young Emperor seems to show much energy.'—'Does he? I know nothing about him.' This the only jar, otherwise all cordial and pleasant."

Herbert Bismarck came to London on a soothing mission in March, but did not venture to apply for an audience of the Prince of Wales. It was six months before peace was restored between H.R.H. and the Emperor. At Homburg, where the Prince and the Duke of Cambridge were doing the cure, and Herbert Bismarck paid a visit, Rosebery noted :

"All was reconciliation at Osborne. The best of uncles and the best of nephews."

The Emperor had been at Cowes at the beginning of the month, when he became an Admiral of the Fleet, and the Queen a Colonel of German Dragoons.

Earlier Rosebery had been interested by an item of Herbert Bismarck's news :

"He told me that Chamberlain had suggested exchange of Heligoland for Angra Pequena and Walfisch Bay, and said he would support it. J.C. strongly Germanophil."

It will be noted later how this notion matured.

In domestic politics the House of Lords Question still simmered, with small prospect that a substantial meal would be served (February 28th). "Black sheep" were to be cooked first, and Lord Carnarvon asked a question about them, urging that the "few, but still notorious" sinners should be treated like men in the Services guilty of conduct unbefitting a gentleman and an officer. By the convenient practice of the House, a debate followed, though there was no motion. One Peer asked how many times might a man rat and not be an unworthy member of the House? Lord Salisbury thought Lord Carnarvon's case overstated, but would not mind creating some power of expulsion. Rosebery defended Mr. Gladstone from the charge of having obstructed the two Bills of last year, but had to

shed a tear over the abandonment of the Life Peerages Bill. He was followed by a noble friend who thought that any Peer convicted of having been twice in any one year at a race meeting, or of owning racehorses, should be incapacitated from sitting; and Rosebery retorted by asking if that proposal was retrospective?

Lord Carnarvon duly introduced his “Discontinuance of Writs Bill” (March 21st) in a speech of much grace and accomplishment. Its rejection was moved on the grounds that it only touched the fringe of the Reform Question, and on others, and an interesting but rather confused debate followed. Rosebery declared himself in favour of Lord Herschell’s suggestion that a Select Committee should examine the situation. But convinced reformers would in no case get much from this measure. The real difficulty consisted in the purely hereditary character of the House.

The Bill ultimately perished by the application of “the previous question.”

During this session one or two matters affecting the County Council and his old post of the Office of Works invited comment from Rosebery, but there was nothing of great import. He had no direct concern with the disputes over Royal Grants on which Gladstone supported the Government against the Left of his own party. But Rosebery was informed and consulted and attended the principal debate on July 25th.

“Sat out dreary speeches by Smith, Labouchere (1½ hours) and Storey (1 hour). Then came Mr. G. with a fine 50 minutes, ending with a most pathetic touch.”

Some other notes on public matters, old and new, may be included in the review of this year :

“Charles Villiers told me Canning the best speaker he ever heard,—appearance, face, eye, went for much. Some good judges, though, preferred Plunket.¹ He remembers old

¹ William Conyngham Plunket, 1st Baron Plunket (1764–1854). Appointed Lord Chancellor of Ireland 1830.

Wilberforce introducing young Macaulay to some benevolent meeting, and Macaulay's speech.

"Granville says that Lord Aberdeen preferred Canning's speaking to Pitt's; but his mother told him that if Canning came in at one door to pass through a room he would not go straight to the other door, but circumnavigate every piece of furniture:—not a bad metaphor."

"Mr. G. furious after dinner about Pitt's later Irish Policy—the worst thing in history, worse than St. Bartholomew's. Acknowledged afterwards 'I am in a passion.'

"John Morley said he was thinking of retiring from politics—the strain was too great. He had just had letters from Carnegie enclosing a sort of blank cheque to pay Chamberlain if that was what J. C. had meant by 'obligations.'¹

"Mr. G. said, 'I speak as a dying man, but I confess I look back with pleasure to the times of liberation in which my political life was cast, and with doubt to the coming times of construction.'

"Dined with Asquith and Haldane at the Blue Posts. Sat next A. Balfour. Took John Morley on to the National Liberal Club Reception."

This is the first conjunction of these names, of which several were to be so closely connected.

Outside the small group of literary politicians such as John Morley and George Trevelyan, Rosebery did not mingle greatly in the world of letters. He met George Meredith at a small dinner and was not captivated, thinking him "affected like his books"; but at a similar feast, where George Russell² was host, he found "Browning very agreeable. Spoke of himself. He had always been independent, and so indifferent to reputation. Wrote for himself and could not trace any sudden rise of fame. His wife's works still sold better than his own. The Browning Society by no means complimentary in B. discussions." Matthew Arnold was a favourite guest at Aston

¹ This was evidently a ludicrous misapprehension by Morley's kind American friend.

² Rt. Hon. G. W. E. Russell (1853–1919). M.P. 1880–85, and 1892–5. Three times Under-Secretary.

Clinton, Lady de Rothschild's home near Mentmore, and thus the Roseberys knew him well, and enjoyed seeing him also at the Durdans. Tennyson, as we know, lived in a small circle which never intersected Rosebery's.

After the County Council rose for the summer vacation six weeks were spent abroad. Lady Rosebery had not been in the best of health, and they began by spending most of August at Homburg. This was the most fashionable moment of that fashionable centre of mild air, mild distractions, and a mild cure. The Duke of Cambridge took them over to his ancestral home at Rumpenheim—

"A homely whitewashed barrack of little cells opening into one another, stiff and simple beyond words, a few yards from the Main. He showed us the summer-house whither his family took refuge while Napoleon's army was marching home to France along the opposite bank from Hanau and Leipsic. It was there that the old Duchess¹ who died this year saw Napoleon. The Duke would not give up his position in England for the Regency of Brunswick."

They passed on to Coburg and Nuremberg and Munich. Thence to the Bavarian Alps and the series of tastelessly extravagant splendours for which King Ludwig, on the border-line between genius and insanity, and most nearly allied to the latter, was responsible. Flying visits to Salzburg and Vienna brought them home via Paris, and the rest of the holidays were spent in Scotland. County Council work filled up the rest of the autumn and early winter.

¹ Augusta, daughter of the Landgrave Frederick of Hesse-Cassel; *m.* 1818, Adolphus, 1st Duke of Cambridge, and *d.* April 1889.

CHAPTER XI

THE TURF : EARLIER YEARS

THE Rosebery colours of primrose and rose hoops, rose cap, were registered in 1868, soon after their owner attained his majority. The safe path of a breeding stud, formed by the purchase of a mare or two and some well-bred yearling fillies, seems a slow business to keen youth; and Rosebery looked out for quicker returns. Mr. W. Cowen's *Ladas*,¹ by *Lambton* out of *Zenobia*, started thrice as a two-year-old in 1868, winning each time. One of the races was the considerable Convivial Produce Stakes at York.

It seemed, therefore, to be a hopeful purchase for a tyro at the game. A substantial sum was paid (1869), and the colt was entrusted to an experienced trainer, James Dover of Ilsley. He ran first in Rosebery's colours in the Derby of 1869, starting at 66 to 1 in a field of twenty-two runners, and finishing last. He ran again badly in the Cesarewitch, carrying 6 st. 7 lb., and at the same forlorn odds. At the Houghton meeting he carried 7 st. 13 lb. in the Cambridgeshire. There were twenty-nine runners, he was not quoted in the betting, and ran nowhere. But on the Friday in the Houghton week he gained his only victory by giving 9 lb. to Prince Soltykoff's *Badsworth* in a match over a mile, and beating him. *Badsworth* cannot have been a good horse.

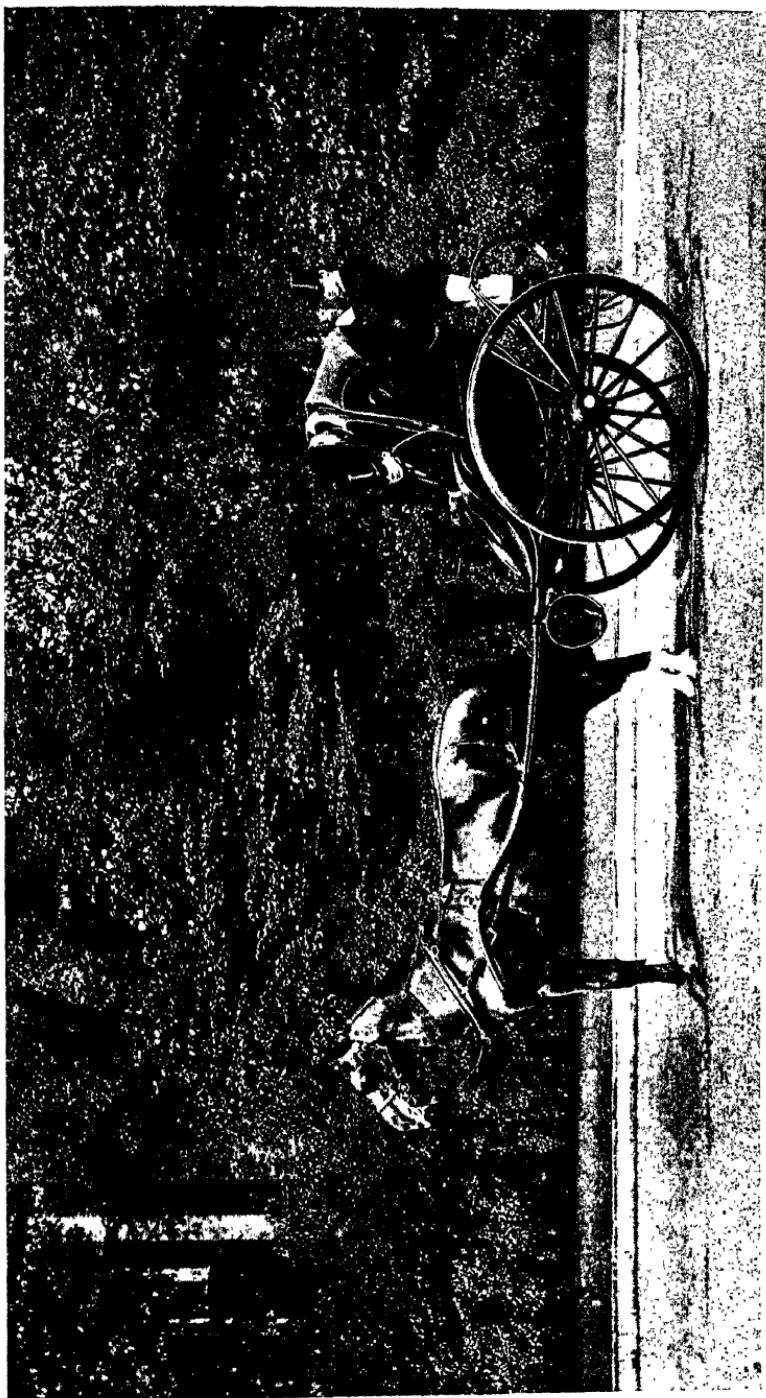
In the following year *Ladas* did no better. Credited with some speed, he was started four times over short distances, running nowhere in the Stewards' Cup at

¹ *Ladas* is said to be an obscure Greek word for a young stag; but the colt was no doubt named after a famous runner, said by one authority to have been the messenger of Alexander the Great. His name became proverbial for speed in later times, as appears from *Juvenal*, Sat. xiii, ll. 96 *et seq.*, and from *Martial*, bk. ii, l. 86.

Goodwood and in the Great Eastern Railway Handicap at Newmarket. In 1871 he ran twice unsuccessfully, and was sold for a trifle to Mr. Henry Chaplin. This was "the Baron's year," when *Hannah*, named after Baron Meyer's only child, won the Oaks and the St. Leger.

In 1869 Rosebery's stable consisted of one five-year-old, two four-year-olds, two three-year-olds (including *Ladas*), and four two-year-olds. One of the four-year-olds, *Athena*, won a couple of races, but there were few victories, and though he was successful at Doncaster, it must have been a poor year for a heavy better.

In 1870 the well-bred two-year-old *Ellesmere*, by *Elland*—*Lady Audley*, won the valuable Gladiateur Stakes at the July meeting, but failed later. Another *Elland* two-year-old, *Andorra*, won two matches. Matches have almost died out nowadays, but in the seventies and eighties they still flourished. Rosebery delighted in making them. There was little racing for him in 1870, and in 1871 he won nothing. But in reality it was one of the most fateful years of his turf career, destined to retrieve his first disappointment, for in October he bought *Paraffin*, by *Blair Athol* from the famous *Paradigm*, as a brood mare. After his purchase of the Durdans he started a breeding stud there. Eighteen seventy-three produced some better luck. He won the Gimcrack Stakes with *Padaroshna*, bought after winning a small race at Stockton. Other two-year-olds did not do much, but Dover won a Maiden Stakes with a two-year-old by *Lecturer* named *The Teacher*. Rosebery bought the colt late in the season, and re-christened him *Aldrich*, after the seventeenth-century Dean of Christ Church, the founder of Peckwater Quad. In the spring of 1874 *Aldrich* won the City and Suburban for Rosebery—his first important race. The colt was no marvel: in a field of nineteen he carried 6 st. 4 lb., and started at 40 to 1. But he was the hero of the most singular racing dream on record.



LORD ROSEBERY IN HIS CAB.

Lord Vivian¹ ran a horse now and then, but he was not of the circle of racing pundits. One night before the race he dreamed that the City and Suburban had been won by a horse called *The Teacher*. He told the rest of the party, and the entry was examined. No such name was found. Later on, when Lord Vivian was told of the changed name, he was quite positive that he had never heard of it, and no explanation was ever forthcoming. It can only be surmised that he had in fact been told of it at some time, and that it passed out of his conscious mind. But even so, it would be a curious freak of the subconscious mind to make the substitution in sleep, about a horse whose chance of winning cannot have been seriously discussed beforehand.

In the same spring Rosebery bought the three-year-old *Couronne de Fer*, by *Macaroni*—*Miss Agnes*. This was a possible Derby hope. He improved on the hapless *Ladas* by running second, and Rosebery kept him for a time as a sire.

Two useful animals ran as two-year-olds in 1875, *Levant*, by *Adventurer*—*Repulse*, winning the Acorn Stakes and July Stakes, and *Father Claret*, by *d'Estournel*—*Defamation*, winning three times.

Eighteen seventy-six was still better, for *Controversy*, bought in the previous December, won the Lincolnshire Handicap and six other races, beating the brilliant *Lowlander* in a match at Ascot. *Levant* carried off two valuable stakes; but *Father Claret* did nothing. An old horse, *The Snail*, bought early in the year, carried off the Northumberland Plate, and the two-year-old *Touchet*, by *Lord Lyon*, won four matches and two small races.

In the following year Rosebery, on the look-out for promising blood, bought out of a selling-race Count Festetics' two-year-old filly *Bonnie Agnes*. This proved to be another lucky stroke. He won the New Stakes with another filly of his own breeding, *Belligerent*, by *Cremorne*—*Lynette*.

¹ 2nd Lord Vivian (1808-1886).

Eighteen seventy-eight witnessed the union of the Durdans and Mentmore studs. Since the death of "the Baron," the latter had been carried on at Crafton on behalf of his daughter. *King Tom*, *Favonius* and *Lecturer* had stood there; and after Baron Meyer's death the great *Macaroni* was bought, and reigned at the stud till 1887.

It was a moderate year's racing for Rosebery. *Touchet* won a race at Ascot; some old horses, such as *Kaleidoscope* and *Oxonian*, bought to carry the colours, picked up some moderate races. One two-year-old winner, *Casuistry*, by *The Miner*—*Lady Caroline*, gained a name later for another stable as the dam of *Paradox*.

The opening of 1879 was propitious. *Touchet*, now five years old, won the Lincolnshire with 8 st. 4 lb. The year closed equally well, for the four-year-old *La Merveille*, by *Blair Athol*—*Cauldron*, who the previous year had run third for the Cambridgeshire for Robert Peck with 6 st. 3 lb., now won it for Rosebery with 8 st. at the pleasant price of 30 to 1. Nor were the two-year-olds idle. Of the five that won races, *Cipollata*, by *Macaroni*—*Duckling*, and *Illuminata*, by *Rosicrucian*—*Paraffin*, who won the Molyneux Stakes, were the most hopeful.

Much was hoped from *Cipollata* the next year, but she was nowhere in the One Thousand Guineas, though she won races at Ascot and the July meeting. None of the other dozen winners of races in 1880 was of great account. The two-year-olds *Town Moor* and *Voluptuary* were considered the best.

Eighteen eighty-one was more striking. *Town Moor* ran third for the Derby; *Voluptuary* won three races, was sold, and later finished up his career on a London stage. Several two-year-olds won races, and two of the fillies became historical. *Vista*, by *Macaroni*—*Verdure* (sister to *Corisande*) was pure Mentmore in descent. She stayed well, winning the Prince of Wales' Nursery at Doncaster and another mile Nursery. The other mare *Kermesse* was probably the best animal Rosebery

ever owned. A brown, by *Hermit*—*Hazeldean*, she was bought as a foal from Mr. Henry Chaplin. At two years old she was once beaten a head by *Dutch Oven*, but won her other five races, including the Champagne Stakes and the Middle Park Plate, in which she beat all the best of the year.

Everything promised grandly for the next season, but in the early spring *Kermesse* got loose at exercise and split both pasterns. She was wonderfully patched up, and won two races at Newmarket in the autumn, after missing her classic engagements. This was the most remarkable mares' year in turf history. Besides *Kermesse*—*Geheimniss*, *Shotover*, *Dutch Oven* and *St. Marguerite* between them would have won every classic race five years out of six. In other respects it was not a bad season for Rosebery. The five-year-old *Prud'homme* won the Chester Cup; one promising two-year-old *Bonnie Jean*, daughter of *Bonnie Agnes*, secured three races; and another two-year-old, *Narcissa*, beat the great *Geheimniss* in the Fernhill Stakes. Altogether Rosebery won twenty races this year.

Eighteen eighty-three was still better, with about the same number of wins, since they included the Oaks, won by *Bonnie Jean*, the second string *Etarre* running third. *Vista* won two races, and there was a hopeful two-year-old *Kinsky*, *Illuminata*'s first foal, by *Kisber*, a sire much favoured by Rosebery.

The next two seasons were inconspicuous, but not deplorable. In 1884 sixteen races were won, four of them by the three-year-old *Kinsky*, sold at the end of the season to Colonel Crewe-Read. Later he won the Chester Cup. The four-year-old *Polemic*, with 6 st. 1 lb., ran second to *St. Gatien* in his famous Cesarewitch.

The next year was also uneventful. *Cipollina*, *Cipollata*'s sister, won the Newmarket Oaks, and three two-year-olds took half a dozen races; but there was nothing in the stable of which to dream dreams; public affairs were absorbing, and Rose-

bery decided to sell the Mentmore yearlings. Genial Mr. Edmund Tattersall wrote (September 30th, 1885) :

"We do not want you to go off the turf. . . . Politics and giving up the turf killed Lord George Bentinck, and we do not want you to injure your health for the good of the country."

Sixteen yearlings sold for £4,715. In the year following five older horses remained in the stable. Three small victories can have brought little grist to the mill. In 1887, 1888, and 1889 Rosebery ran nothing, and the yearlings were sold. Thus closed the first chapter of Rosebery's racing career. It had opened in blank disappointment, but was not altogether a fiasco. Many owners have raced a longer time without winning a classic event.

END OF VOL. I

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